

THE SECOND CHAPTER
(ESTABLISHMENT OF PRAMANA)
OF THE
PRAMANAVARTTIKA
by Dharmakirti

Handout for the Fall 2015 Term¹
Advanced Buddhist Philosophy Course in English

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Technical Notes

Formatting of Sanskrit & Tibetan Names & Terminology

Sanskrit terms and titles, that are not proper names, are initially presented in bold italics. Sanskrit diacritics are not used in this text.

Tibetan words are rendered in the English alphabet according to the Wylie system. When both a Sanskrit term and its Tibetan translation are shown in parentheses, the Tibetan always follows the Sanskrit.

Tibetan proper names that appear in the body of the text (not in parenthesis) are rendered in simple phonetics, rather than in Wylie. Those proper names include: Gyaltsab Je (Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen), Yeshe Thabgyal, Geshe Palden Drakpa, Geshe Wangchen, Geshe Gyatso, Geshe Tsering Norbu.

Significance of the fonts and formatting used in the translation of the Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* by Gyaltsab Je

TEXT SOURCE	LOCATION ON PAGES OF HANDOUT	FONT
Gyaltsab Je's commentary	at the left margin	Bookman Old Style 11pt.
Gyaltsab Je's headings of the OUTLINES of the <i>Pramanavarttika</i>	at the left margin	Bookman Old Style 13pt.
Indian or Tibetan sources, e.g., Dharmakirti's <i>Pramanavarttika</i>	indented	<i>Bookman Old Style 11pt. italics</i>
*Explanatory comments by contemporary masters	indented	Cambria 11pt.

* Explanations and clarifications of difficult points by contemporary masters have been translated and summarized by Ven. Kelsang Wangmo and appended to Gyaltsab Je's text.

Since different terms are used to translate the Sanskrit word *pramana* (*tshad ma*), for the sake of consistency Ven. Kelsang Wangmo has used the Sanskrit term in translating the text of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* and Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, instead of an English equivalent. However, in translating the explanatory comments by contemporary masters, *pramana* is only employed in a few instances. More frequently, an appropriate English term is used. With few exceptions, the English term used is "valid cognizer".

Introduction

The following handout for the IBD Buddhist philosophy course on the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* contains translations of two texts:

1. The second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel; Commentary on [Dignaga's Compendium of] Pramana*)
2. The second chapter of Gyaltsab Je's commentary on the *Pramanavarttika*, called *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byes pa rnam bshad thar lam gsal byed*) — usually referred to as *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (*thar lam gsal byed*)

Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* is interspersed with the *Pramanavarttika*, for the commentary provides detailed expositions on the meaning of the verses of the root text.

Furthermore, since both texts are difficult to comprehend on their own, they are also interspersed with additional explanations by contemporary masters such as Ven. Geshe Yeshe Thabgyal, Ven. Geshe Palden Drakpa, Ven. Geshe Wangchen, Ven. Geshe Gyatso, Ven. Geshe Tsering Norbu, and others.

As the name of the text implies, Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* is a commentary on Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* (*Pramana-samuccaya; tshad ma kun btus*). The six chapters of Dignaga's *Compendium* are written in verse and constitute one of the most important works on *pramana*.

Here, the Sanskrit term *pramana* translates as “logic” or “epistemology”, for it refers to the main topic of Dignaga and Dharmakirti's texts. However, when explaining Buddhist philosophical concepts, *pramana* is usually translated as “valid cognizer”. In some contexts it can also be translated as “authority”, “authoritative”, “authentic”, “proof”, “proven”, and so forth.

Dignaga

Dignaga (ca. 450-540 CE) was a proponent of the Chittamatra Following Reasoning philosophical school. He was one of Vasubandhu's four great disciples, each of whom surpassed their teacher in a particular field of Buddhist study. Dignaga was more learned than Vasubandhu in *Pramana*².

Dignaga was born into a Brahmin family in Simhavaktra, near Kanchi in South India. At a young age, he became very proficient in the sacred Brahmin scriptures and the worldly sciences. However, he eventually lost interest in the spiritual system of the Brahmins, developed renunciation for the suffering nature of cyclic existence, and took ordination from a Buddhist teacher called Nagadatta (*glang po byin*) of the Vatsiputriya system, a sub-school of the Buddhist Vaibhashika School. Nagadatta named him Dignaga (*phyogs kyi glang po*) and gave him extensive teachings on the three baskets according to the Vatsiputriya system.

Followers of the Vatsiputriya system assert a type of self that is inexpressible as something substantially or imputedly existent, or as being the same or different from the five aggregates. Dignaga was instructed by his teacher to meditate on the inexpressible self. In an attempt to find and comprehend the inexpressible self, Dignaga is said to have kindled fires in the four directions, stripped off his clothes, and meditated day and night. When he reported back to his teacher that he was unable to find such a self, his teacher took this as an indirect criticism and sent him to study elsewhere.

Dignaga went to stay at Nalanda Monastery where he became a disciple of Vasubandhu. He studied and mastered the entire body of sutras and treatises of the Hinayana and Mahayana, and became a great tantric practitioner, receiving instructions from Manjushri himself. He also developed great skills in debate and on numerous occasions defended the monastery against learned non-Buddhist scholars who challenged the monks in debate. Dignaga became particularly renowned for having defeated the great

² The other three disciples were (1) Shtiramati who was more learned than Vasubandhu in *Abhidharma*, (2) Gunaprabha who was more learned in the *Vinaya*, and (3) Arya Vimuktisena who was more learned in the *Prajnaparamita*.

The Second Chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*

Brahmin scholar, Sudurjaya, who — as a result of losing the debate — converted to Buddhism together with his disciples.

At the time, it was customary for a scholar who lost a debate to adopt, along with his disciples, the spiritual system of the victor.

Dignaga eventually left Nalanda in order to lead a contemplative life in the forests of Orissa. There he resolved to compose what became his most famous work, the ***Compendium of Pramana***, as a compilation of his many previous writings on *Pramana*, which, according to his own description, were fragmentary works. It is said that he wrote the first verse of the ***Compendium***, comprising the homage and promise to compose the text, on a rock at his cave hermitage:

*To the one who has become pramana, the one wishing to benefit migrators,
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector”, I bow down.*

*In order to establish pramana, I will herewith create a single compendium of my various
fragmentary writings.*

When he wrote those words many auspicious signs occurred, such as light blazing forth, the earth trembling, loud thunder rolling in the sky, and so forth. A Brahmin ascetic called Krishnamuni observed these signs and through his clairvoyance understood that they were the results of Dignaga’s writing. Driven by envy, he went to Dignaga’s cave while the latter was away on alms-rounds and erased the words. When Dignaga returned, he wrote the verse again, and again Krishnamuni came to erase it. The third time Dignaga left an additional note that read, “Please do not erase this verse just for fun because with this verse I am pursuing a great aim. Also, there is no point in erasing it out of envy since it is in my mind from where it cannot be removed. But if you disagree with these words, you should show yourself, and we will debate.” When the auspicious signs occurred a third time, Krishnamuni went again to Dignaga’s cave. But upon reading the note he refrained from erasing the verse and waited for Dignaga’s return. The two debated and Krishnamuni was defeated three times. When Dignaga asked him to adopt the Buddha Dharma as a result of his defeat, the Brahmin ascetic grew furious and emanated magical flames that burned Dignaga’s clothes and possessions.

Distraught and discouraged by the Brahmin’s reaction, Dignaga felt that if he could not help the highly intelligent Brahmin, how could he be of benefit to all sentient beings by composing the ***Compendium of Pramana***? He threw the chalk with which he had written the verse up in the air, thinking, “As soon as the chalk touches the ground, I will give up my aspiration to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and instead strive to become self-liberated”. But the chalk did not fall back to the ground and when he looked up, he saw Manjushri in the sky, holding the chalk. Manjushri asked Dignaga not to give up his mind of enlightenment, and promised to protect him until he attained the state of a Buddha. He also asked him to compose the ***Compendium*** and prophesied that in the future this commentary would become an eye for migrating beings.

Encouraged by these words, Dignaga composed the ***Compendium of Pramana***, which has continued to be the subject of study, contemplation and meditation, along with Dharmakirti’s ***Pramanavarttika***, for over a millennium; at first widely in India and then in Tibet, Mongolia and the Himalayan regions.

After completing the text, Dignaga travelled around South India and greatly furthered the spread of Buddhism. One of his main disciples was Ishvarasena (*dbang phyung sde*) who composed a commentary on the ***Compendium of Pramana*** and later became one of Dharmakirti’s teachers.

Dharmakirti

Dharmakirti (ca. 600-660 CE) was also a follower of the Chittamatra School Following Reasoning. He was born to a Brahmin family in Tirumalai in the kingdom of Chudamani of Tamil Nadu. Until the age of eighteen he trained in the Brahminical tradition, and he became very well-versed in non-Buddhist philosophy. Then, upon reading a Buddhist text, he developed faith in the Buddha Dharma and started to dress in the style of a Buddhist layperson. This angered the Brahmins and he was expelled from his community.

Dharmakirti went to Nalanda monastery where he received ordination and extensive teachings from Dharmapala (*chos skyong*). Then he requested Ishvarasena, who was a direct disciple of Dignaga, to

teach him the **Compendium of Pramana**. Ishvarasena taught him the text three times. After the first time, Dharmakirti's understanding of the **Compendium** had become equal to that of Ishvarasena; after the second time, it had become equal to Dignaga's; and after the third time Dharmakirti was able to recognize that some of Ishvarasena's assertions were not in accordance with Dignaga's views. After Dharmakirti revealed those mistaken assertions to Ishvarasena, the latter was delighted by his student's intelligence and granted him permission to compose a commentary on the **Compendium of Pramana** in order to refute those assertions.

Dharmakirti was also initiated into the Buddhist tantras, became a highly accomplished practitioner, and had a direct vision of Heruka.

In order to deepen his understanding of non-Buddhist philosophy, Dharmakirti then went to work as the servant of a renowned non-Buddhist scholar and his family for several years. Pretending not to be a Buddhist, Dharmakirti learned all the secret points of the scholar's philosophical system. Later by challenging and defeating the renowned scholar in debate, Dharmakirti converted him and his disciples to Buddhism.

Thereafter, Dharmakirti travelled across India converting many people to Buddhism. Eventually he arrived at the gates of the residence of King Utpullapusa, who had heard of Dharmakirti's great fame and invited him to stay in his kingdom. Dharmakirti accepted and while staying there composed the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (*tshad ma sde bdun*) — one of which is the **Pramanavarttika** — as well as an auto-commentary on the first chapter of the **Pramanavarttika**. However, most contemporary scholars were unable to grasp the meaning of the treatises. Those few who understood their meaning, moved by envy, claimed that they were incorrect and tied them with string to the tail of a dog. Dharmakirti responded that the dog, by running through different villages and cities, would in that manner spread the treatises. He also added a verse to the beginning of the **Pramanavarttika** (after the verse of homage and the promise to compose the text) that reads:

*Most living beings are attached to the mundane and not endowed with the
dexterity of wisdom.
Not only are they not interested in excellent teachings, they are hateful owing to
the defilement of envy.
This is why the thought that this [treatise] will be beneficial to others does not
occur.
But having familiarized [my] mind with excellent teachings, I am happy [to
compose the treatise] for the sake of generating great striving.*

Sometime later Dharmakirti taught the **Pramanavarttika** to two of his main disciples, Devendrabodhi (*lha dbang blo*) and Shakyabodhi (*sha'kya blo*). Afterwards, he asked Devendrabodhi to compose a commentary on the text. However, displeased with the first draft Dharmakirti washed it away with water; displeased with the second draft he burned it. He finally accepted the third draft but criticized it, remarking that although the explicit meaning of the text was conveyed, the deeper implicit meaning was not.

Thinking that no one would be able to properly comprehend his text, Dharmakirti added the following line to the end of the **Pramanavarttika**:

*Just as a river into the ocean, [the meaning of this treatise] will dissolve into my
body and disappear.*

Towards the end of his life, Dharmakirti founded a school and a temple at Kalinga where he passed away.

Both Dignaga and Dharmakirti strongly affected the course of both Buddhist philosophy and Indian philosophy in general. Their expositions on language, negation, direct perception, etc., were highly influential among both Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophers, but their greatest impact derived from their analysis of inferential reasoning.

Dignaga and Dharmakirti are often described as Buddhist logicians, for they formulated a system of logic and epistemology that was based on a new form of deductive reasoning. Yet this does not mean that they were chiefly interested in the formal properties of reasoning. Instead, they regarded logic as a

useful tool that enables Buddhist practitioners to eliminate their misperceptions, replace them with correct apprehensions of reality and eventually attain liberation and Buddhahood.

The debate format that is still very popular among Tibetan Buddhist students of debate is based largely on Dignaga and Dharmakirti's works. Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika*, in particular, provides Tibetan Buddhist philosophers with a standard vocabulary that is used as a framework for analysis of the various Buddhist scriptures. It also represents the epistemological foundation of the curriculum in many Tibetan monastic institutions.

Gyaltsab Je

Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen (1364–1432) was born in Tsang province of central Tibet. He was ordained as a monk at the age of ten and given the name Darma Rinchen (*dar ma rin chen*). Gyaltsab Je studied at a Sakya Monastery, the Kadam monastery of Sangpu (*gsang phu*) and the Kagyu monastery of Tsetang (*rtse thang*), which later converted to the Gelug tradition. Like Lama Tsongkhapa, he was also a student of the renowned Sakya Master Rendawa Zhoenu Lodro (*red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros*).

After extensive study of the *Prajnaparamita*, *Pramana*, *Vinaya*, and so forth, Gyaltsab Je became an accomplished and eloquent scholar of the Sakya tradition, famed for his intellect and knowledge. While visiting different monasteries in Central Tibet, he met Lama Tsongkhapa. He had heard of Lama Tsongkhapa's fame and went to attend one of Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings at Nyaeltoe Radrong (*gnyal stod ra grong*) Monastery. As Gyaltsab Je listened to Lama Tsongkhapa, he was astounded by the clarity and profundity of his teaching, and generated great faith. From that time on, Gyaltsab Je was completely devoted to Lama Tsongkhapa and became one of his main disciples. He received extensive teachings from Lama Tsongkhapa and took copious notes. Being a prolific writer he composed numerous commentaries (such as the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*). He also supervised the construction of Ganden Monastery.

Before Lama Tsongkhapa passed away, he appointed Gyaltsab Je as the first throne holder of the Ganden (or Gelug) tradition.

Seven Treatises on Pramana

As mentioned above, Dharmakirti composed seven commentaries on the *Compendium of Pramana*, referred to as the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (*tshad ma sde bdun*). These seven texts can be categorized into:

- i. Three treatises that are like a body, and
- ii. Four treatises that are like branches.

The three treatises that are like a body are:

- a) *Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel; Commentary on [Dignaga's Compendium of] Pramana*);
- b) *Pramanaviniscaya* (*tshad ma rnam nges; Ascertainment of Pramana*);
- c) *Nyayabindu* (*rigs thigs; Drops of Reasoning*).

The four treatises that are like branches are:

- a) *Hetubindu* (*gtan tshigs thig pa; Drops of Logic*);
- b) *Sambandhapariksha* (*'brel ba brtag pa; Investigating Relations*);
- c) *Samtanantarasiddhi* (*rgyud gzhan grub pa; Proof of Other [Mental] Continuums*);
- d) *Vadanyaya* (*rtsod pa'i rigs pa; Reasoning of Debate*).

The three *treatises that are like a body* are general elaborations on Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* on logic and epistemology. The first is the most extensive, the second is slightly shorter, and the third is the shortest. These three are *treatises that are like a body* because they each teach the eight 'pivotal points of logic' (*rtog ge'i tshig don rgyad*).

The eight 'pivotal points of logic' are:

1. Correct inferential cognizers (*rjes dpag yang dag*);
2. False inferential cognizers (*rjes dpag ltar snang*);
3. Correct direct perceivers (*mngon sum yang dag*);
4. False direct perceivers (*mngon sum ltar snang*);
5. Correct proof statements (*sgrub ngag yang dag*);
6. False proof statements (*sgrub ngag ltar snang*);
7. Correct refutations (*sun 'byin yang dag*);
8. False refutations (*sun 'byin ltar snang*).

Each of the three texts teaches the eight 'pivotal points of logic' by *primarily* teaching the four correct pivotal points, while teaching the four false pivotal points in an *ancillary* fashion.

The last four texts are *treatises that are like branches* because they do not teach all eight 'pivotal points of logic' but only some of them, and because they are just supplements to the first, third, or fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The *Hetubindu* (on correct reasons) and *Sambandhapariksha* (on the relationship between correct reasons and predicates) are supplements to the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*, while the *Samtanantarasiddhi* (on the issue of other minds) is a supplement to the third and the *Vadanyaya* (on debate techniques, etc.) is a supplement to the fourth chapter.

Eight Pivotal Points of Logic

Among the four 'correct pivotal points of logic', (1) correct inferential cognizers and (3) correct direct perceivers are considered to be the tools that facilitate our own understanding. They function mainly for our own benefit for they enable us to accomplish our personal short and long-term goals by replacing harmful misperceptions with well-founded recognition of reality.

(1) *Correct inferential cognizers* and inferential cognizers are equivalent. Inferential cognizers are conceptual consciousnesses that realize their main objects in dependence on correct reasons. These types of consciousness are essential for Buddhist practice because they facilitate the realization of essential concepts, such as the suffering nature of cyclic existence, impermanence, selflessness, etc., which need to be apprehended in order to gradually eliminate the numerous misperceptions that are responsible for our problems and difficulties. However, most of these essential concepts are slightly hidden phenomena and cannot be perceived initially without relying on logical reasoning. Logical reasoning, in turn, relies on logically correct syllogisms. An example of such a syllogism is:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is a product of its own causes and conditions. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame.

A correct syllogism has four parts: (i) subject, (ii) predicate, (iii) correct reason and (iv) example. In the case of the syllogism cited above, "physical body" is the subject, "impermanent" the predicate, "being a product of its own causes and conditions" the correct reason, and "the last moment of the candle flame" the example. Also, the composite of the two, the subject (physical body) and the predicate (impermanent), constitutes the *object that is to be established* (*bsgrub bya*), also called the *probandum*. Hence, "the physical body is impermanent" is the above syllogism's *object that is to be established* (i.e., it is that which is realized by the inferential cognizer which arises in dependence on the syllogism).

Furthermore, for a syllogism to be logically correct, its reason must have three qualities. These three qualities are called the 'three modes of the reason':

- a. The property of the subject
- b. The forward pervasion
- c. The counter pervasion

The reason of the above-cite syllogism possesses the first mode of the reason, the **property of the subject**, because the reason (*being a product of its own causes and conditions*) is the property (or characteristic) of the subject (*the physical body*). The reason is the property of the subject because the *physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*.

The reason of the syllogism possesses the second mode of the reason, the **forward pervasion**, because — to put it simply — 'whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent'.

In the same way, it possesses the third mode of the reason, the **counter-pervasion**, because 'whatever is not impermanent is necessarily not a product of its own causes and conditions'.

After having realized the different parts and qualities of the syllogism — *e.g.*, that *the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*, that *whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent*, and so forth — a practitioner eventually generates an inferential cognizer realizing the *object that is to be established* (the *probandum*), *i.e.*, realizing that the physical body is impermanent. Since such realization arises in dependence on a correct reason (being a product of its own causes and conditions), inferential cognizers are described as conceptual consciousnesses that realize their main objects (*e.g.*, that the physical body is impermanent) in dependence on correct reasons.

(3) *Correct* direct perceivers and direct perceivers are also equivalent. Direct perceivers refer to correct sense or mental consciousnesses that perceive their main object directly without relying on a generic image. Examples of direct perceivers are sense direct perceivers, such as an eye consciousness apprehending a table, an ear consciousness apprehending a song, a nose consciousness apprehending the smell of perfume, and so forth. These sense consciousnesses realize phenomena that are obvious or manifest (*i.e.*, not hidden), such as shapes, colors, sounds, etc. Other examples of direct perceiver are self-knowers (explained below), clairvoyant awarenesses and yogic direct perceivers. Yogic direct perceivers are mental direct perceivers that directly realize their main objects (*e.g.*, impermanence, selflessness, etc.) in dependence on prolonged and extensive meditation.

Direct perceivers are essential to Buddhist practice. Although hidden phenomena are realized for the first time by inferential cognizers, such a realization is not sufficient for practitioners aspiring to transform their mind and attain liberation or Buddhahood. Such a realization is not sufficient because inferential cognizers are conceptual consciousnesses that do not realize their objects directly but through a generic image.

For instance, an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness does not realize selflessness directly but through the generic image of selflessness. Hence, a practitioner who has cultivated an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness continues to familiarize with the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness until, after prolonged and intense meditation, that consciousness transforms into a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness, which is strong enough to serve as an effective antidote to the misperception of the self and to other afflictions.

Ordinary direct perceivers, such as sense direct perceivers, are also significant in Buddhist practice for they enable practitioners to listen to teachings, read the scriptures, etc. They also facilitate inferential cognition of a hidden phenomenon. For instance, a practitioner who generated the inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent in dependence on the above syllogism (*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is the product of its own causes and conditions*) must have realized, prior to generating such an inferential cognizer, that *the physical body is the product of its own causes and conditions*. But unlike the *physical body being impermanent*, the *physical body being a product of its own causes and conditions* is not a hidden phenomenon, for it can be realized for the first time by an eye consciousness.

(5) Correct proof statements and (7) correct refutations are considered to be the tools that facilitate others' understanding, which is why they are mainly for the benefit of others. After having attained realizations ourselves by means of inferential cognizers and direct perceivers, we need to assist others in attaining the same realizations by refuting their wrong views with correct refutations, and by generating realizations in their mental continuums through proof statements.

(5) Correct proof statements are verbal statements that express a correct syllogism. An example of a proof statement is, "Whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame. Likewise, the physical body is also a product of its own causes and conditions." Here these words state that just as the last moment of a candle flame is impermanent because it is a product of its own causes and conditions, likewise the physical body is impermanent because it is a product of its own causes and conditions.

Therefore, the words of the proof statement express the following syllogism:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is a product of its own causes and conditions. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame.

In dependence on hearing that proof statement, a person who has not yet realized that the physical body is impermanent is able to cultivate an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent.

(7) Correct refutations refer to correct consequences. Like a syllogism, a consequence is a form of logical statement, which one cites to help another person first to recognize and then to let go of a wrong view. A consequence is stated in such a way as to reveal the absurdity of that person's wrong view; it turns his own assertions against him, so that he is unable to give a correct response without contradicting what he asserted.

For instance, to a person who holds that (a) the physical body is permanent, that (b) the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions, and that (c) whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent, the following consequence is cited:

Regarding the subject, the physical body, it follows that it is not a product of its own causes and condition because it is permanent.

In this case, the person accepts that *the physical body is permanent*, which is why he cannot claim that the **reason is not established** (i.e., he cannot claim that it is not correct that the physical body is permanent).

Since he accepts the forward and counter-pervasions (i.e., that whatever is *permanent* is necessarily *not* a product of its own causes and conditions, and whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily *not* permanent), he cannot claim that there is **no pervasion**. Lastly he cannot even accept that the physical body is *not* a product of its own causes and conditions, for that would contradict his assertion that *the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*. He is thus left speechless.

The person comes to realize that his views are contradictory, which enables him to reassess his beliefs until he either thinks that the physical body is probably impermanent or is convinced that it is. At that point one cites a proof statement expressing a syllogism that establishes that the physical body is impermanent.

As mentioned above, in dependence on that syllogism the person is able to eventually generate an inferential cognizer *realizing* that the physical body is impermanent.

Regarding the four 'false pivotal points of logic', (2) false inferential cognizers refer to conceptual consciousnesses that are not actual inferential cognizers because they do not realize their objects. An example of a false inferential cognizer is a correctly assuming consciousness, perceiving that the physical body is impermanent, which did not arise in dependence on a syllogism. Another example is a correctly assuming consciousness, perceiving that the physical body is impermanent, which arose in dependence on a wrong syllogism. A wrong syllogism is a logically incorrect syllogism and therefore does not lead to an inferential cognizer realizing the syllogism's *object that is to be established* (the *probandum*). For instance, the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it exists*, is a wrong syllogism since there is 'no pervasion'. There is 'no pervasion' because whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent. Whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent because there are phenomena that are permanent.

Another example of a wrong syllogism is: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is permanent because it is unchangeable*. This is a wrong syllogism because the reason is not an attribute of the subject, i.e., the physical body is not unchangeable. Such a wrong syllogism may give rise to a wrong conceptual consciousness perceiving the physical body to be permanent, which is also a false inferential cognizer.

(4) False direct perceivers refer to conceptual consciousnesses or wrong non-conceptual awarenesses. Since false direct perceivers are either conceptual or wrong consciousnesses they are not actual direct perceivers. Examples include a conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness, an eye consciousness perceiving a blue snow mountain, and a memory consciousness remembering a table.

(6) False proof statements are statements that express a wrong syllogism. This means that wrong proof statements express a logically incorrect syllogism in dependence on which one cannot generate an inferential cognizer realizing the syllogism's *object that is to be established* (the *probandum*). An example of a false proof statement is: "Whatever is unchangeable is necessarily permanent. For instance, like the absence of an elephant on the table. The physical body is also unchangeable." This statement is a false proof statement because it expresses the following wrong syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is permanent because it is unchangeable. For instance, like the absence of an elephant on the table.*

(8) Wrong consequences are consequences that do not reveal the absurdities of a person's wrong view, so that the person is unable to become aware of his contradictory assertions.

An example of a wrong consequence is: "*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it follows that it is not a product of its own causes and conditions because it is permanent*" addressed to a person who holds that the physical body is (a) permanent and (b) a product of its own causes and conditions, but does not hold that (c) whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent.

It is important to identify and understand these *false pivotal points of logic*, for practitioners may confuse them with their correct counterparts.

Pramanavarttika

Among the *Seven Treatises of Pramana*, the most popular one is the *Pramanavarttika*, which has been more widely studied than Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* in Tibet, Mongolia and the Himalaya region.

The *Pramanavarttika* is written in verse and has four chapters:

1. The chapter on inference for one's own benefit (*Svarthanumana*; *rang don rjes dpag gi le'u*);
2. The chapter on the establishment of a *pramana* (*Pramanasiddhi*; *tshad ma grub pa'i le'u*);
3. The chapter on direct perception (*Pratyaksha*; *mngon sum le'u*);
4. The chapter on inference for others' benefit (*Prarthanumana*; *gzhan don rjes dpag gi le'u*).

Chapter on Inference for One's Own Benefit

Unlike the last three chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*, the first does not actually elaborate on any of the verses or chapters of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, but serves as an introduction to the text. It sets forth inferential cognizers (both the correct and false inferential cognizers, two of the eight *correct pivotal points of logic*) because, as Dharmakirti explains in his auto-commentary on the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*:

Thorough discernment of that which is factual and that which is not depends on inferential cognizers.

Therefore, study and contemplation of the first chapter aids practitioners to cultivate inferential cognizers in their mental continuum, which in turn facilitates their comprehension of the last three chapters.

However, instead of explaining the inferential cognizers themselves, the first chapter expounds on that which mainly gives rise to inferential cognizers, *i.e.*, correct syllogisms, and presents their general structure, categories, definitions, and so forth.

Chapter on Establishment of Pramana

The second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is the most important one. It comments only on the first two lines of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, which constitute the homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. Elaborating on the two lines of homage, the second chapter presents liberation, Buddhahood, and the

paths that lead to these two states. Dharmakirti presents liberation, Buddhahood, and the paths that lead there by way of establishing that the Buddha is *pramana*. However, this does not mean that the Buddha is literally a valid cognizer, because valid cognizers are consciousnesses while the Buddha is not a consciousness but a person. Instead, it means that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. The Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

As part of establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, the second chapter also sets forth past and future lives, the four noble truths, and so forth.

Some scholars explain that the reason why Dharmakirti composed the second chapter is that at the time, numerous critics expressed their disapproval of Dignaga's works on *pramana*. As mentioned above, in a Buddhist context, *pramana* is usually translated as "valid cognizer". Valid cognizers are awarenesses that are newly non-deceptive, *i.e.*, that newly realize their main objects. There are two types of valid cognizers: (a) direct valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are direct perceivers) and (b) inferential valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are inferential cognizers).

One of the main objectives of the *psramana* literature is to teach practitioners the means of cultivating correct apprehension of the essential concepts of the Buddha Dharma. Such apprehension depends primarily on realizing phenomena which are currently hidden to us that we can realize initially only with inferential cognizers. Inferential cognizers in turn depend on correct syllogisms and thus on logical reasoning. Since the *pramana* literature elucidates such logical reasoning and the way to utilize it as a tool to comprehend impermanence, selflessness, and so forth, commentaries on *pramana* are usually referred to as commentaries on "logic" or "epistemology", and the study of *pramana* is referred to as the study of "logic" or "epistemology".

Many Indian scholars were unable to recognize the value of Dignaga's work. Some claimed that teachings on *psramana* (*i.e.*, logic or epistemology) were not based on the teachings of the Buddha. Others alleged that the main purpose of the *pramana* literature was to defeat an opponent in debate and that it was of no use to those aspiring to attain liberation or Buddhahood.

Therefore, Dharmakirti taught the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* to counteract these assertions by demonstrating the significance of the *pramana* literature with respect to studying, contemplating and meditating on past and future lives, the four noble truths, liberation, Buddhahood, and so forth.

Please note that even though in general, the *Pramanavarttika* is based on the point of view of the Chittamatra School Following Reasoning, the second chapter is written from the perspective of the Sautrantika School (although it contains passages that are from the point of view of the Chittamatra School).

Also, of the two types of selflessness, selflessness of person and selflessness of phenomena other than person, the second chapter sets forth selflessness of person. The only exceptions are some of the passages that are from the point of view of the Chittamatra School which also present selflessness of phenomena.

Chapter on Direct Perception & Chapter on Inference for Others' Benefit

The last two chapters of the *Pramanavarttika* comment on the actual body of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, *i.e.*, the six chapters of Dignaga's text. Among the eight 'pivotal points of logic', the third chapter presents correct and false direct perceivers, and the fourth chapter presents correct and false proof statements as well as correct and false refutations.

Elucidation of the Path to Liberation

Dharmakirti's verses are very terse and their meaning is often difficult to access. Therefore, students of the *Pramanavarttika* mostly rely on one or more of its commentaries.

One of these commentaries is Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (which is written in prose). It is one of the foremost Tibetan commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika* still studied, debated,

and meditated on in most Gelugpa monastic institutions; it is thus part of a living and vibrant philosophical tradition. Contemporary masters regularly refer to it (and Dharmakirti's root text) when explaining past and future lives, the four noble truths, liberation, Buddhahood, and so forth.

Gyaltsab Je composed the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* based on the Indian commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika*. However, unlike most Indian commentators, Gyaltsab Je provides extremely detailed outlines, as is customary in many Tibetan treatises. The *Elucidation* structures Dharmakirti's root text by dividing it into numerous textual sections, with each section having a different heading. The advantage of such a systematic format is that the text becomes more accessible and easier to comprehend.

Furthermore, not only does Gyaltsab Je offer comprehensive explanations of the meaning of Dharmakirti's verses, he also provides lengthy discussions, thought-provoking analysis, and invaluable summaries.

In the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, he begins the presentation of the second chapter by bowing down to the revered Gurus. Thereafter, he cites the "second heading", which is the main heading of the second chapter. This heading is referred to as the "second heading", for it is the second of three headings cited at the beginning of the *Elucidation*. These three are really the subheadings of an earlier heading, which together with yet another heading constitute the basic headings of the four chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*. The two basic headings are:

- (1) The means for oneself to ascertain liberation and the paths that lead there
- (2) Having ascertained these, the means of assisting others [to ascertain liberation and the paths that lead there]

Of these two, the second is the main heading of the fourth chapter, while the first (as mentioned above) is the one that has three sub-headings:

- (1.1) The means of ascertaining hidden phenomena
- (1.2) An explanation of the objects of ascertainment — liberation, omniscience and the paths that lead there
- (1.3) The means of ascertaining obvious/manifest phenomena

Among the three subheadings, the first is the main heading of the first chapter, the second is the main heading of the second chapter, and the third is the main heading of the third chapter.

After citing the main heading of the second chapter, Gyaltsab Je gives a short introduction to the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*, in which he briefly explains the meaning of the two lines of homage of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* and the reason for establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. Thereafter he starts his elucidation of the verses in Dharmakirti's second chapter.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDYING THE INTRODUCTION

1. Who composed the *Compendium of Pramana* and how many chapters does it have?
2. Who composed the *Pramanavarttika* and how many chapters does it have?
3. Who composed the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation*?
4. Which of these three commentaries are written in verse and which are written in prose?
5. On which text does the *Pramanavarttika* primarily comment?
6. On which text does the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation* primarily comment?
7. Which philosophical tenet school does Dignaga follow?
8. Which philosophical tenet school does Dharmakirti follow?
9. Which philosophical tenet school does Gyaltsab Je follow?

The Second Chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*

10. Among the *Seven Treatises of the Pramana*, which are the three treatises that are like a body, and which four treatises are like branches?
11. Which of the three *treatises that are like a body* is the longest and which one is the shortest?
12. How are Dignaga and Dharmakirti significant from the point of view of logic or epistemology?
13. Why are the first three treatises *like a body*, and the last four *like branches*?
14. What are the eight 'pivotal points of logic'? Think of an example for each of the eight.
15. Which of the eight 'pivotal points of logic' are mainly for one's own benefit, and which are mainly for the benefit of others?
16. Why are the four correct 'pivotal points of logic' important for Buddhist practice?
17. Why are the four false 'pivotal points of logic' explained?
18. What does an inferential cognizer depend upon in order to realize its main object?
19. What is main subject matter of the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
20. What is main subject matter of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
21. What is main subject matter of the third chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
22. What is main subject matter of the fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
23. Why did Dharmakirti compose the second chapter?
24. Why is the topic of logic or epistemology called "*Pramana*", i.e., "valid cognizer"?
25. How is the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation* different from most Indian commentaries?

Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika*

I bow down to the revered gurus

The second [heading] is:

EXPLANATION OF [THIS CHAPTER'S] OBJECTS OF REALIZATION – LIBERATION, OMNISCIENCE, AND THE PATHS THAT LEAD THERE

As mentioned above, the main heading of the second chapter is: **Explanation of the Objects of Realization- Liberation, Omniscience, and the Paths that Lead There.** Therefore, the main topics of the second chapter are liberation, omniscience, and the different paths leading to either of these states.

[The main heading of the second chapter is divided in two:]

- (1) General meaning
- (2) Meaning of the branches

In the *General Meaning*, Gyaltsab Je provides an introductory explanation. In the *Meaning of the Branches*, he starts the actual explanation of the verses of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*.

THE GENERAL MEANING

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga
- (2) The way the meaning [of Dignaga's explanation] is elucidated by the author of the *Pramanavarttika*
- (3) [Dignaga and Dharmakirti's] view

Under the first heading — **Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga** — Gyaltsab Je cites the first two lines of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* (the homage) and two lines that are the promise to compose the text. The two lines of homage from the *Compendium of Pramana* are referred to here as the *explanation by Dignaga*.

After citing the homage and the promise to compose the text, Gyaltsab Je briefly explains the meaning of those four lines.

The reason for citing the homage at the beginning of the second chapter is that, as mentioned before, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* chiefly comments on the two lines of Dignaga's homage.

CITING THE EXPLANATION BY ACHARYA DIGNAGA

[The homage and the promise to compose the text read:]

*To the one who has become pramana, the one wishing to benefit migrators,
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector” I bow down.*

*Out of love for migrators deceived by faulty logicians,
I will properly explain [the chapter on] the establishment of pramana.*

As mentioned above, the first two lines are from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*. With those words Dignaga pays homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. However, the latter two lines are not from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*. Instead, they are the promise to compose the text taken from Prajnakaragupta's *Ornament of the Pramanavarttika* (*Pramanavarttikalamkara*; *tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi rgyan*), which is a commentary on the *Compendium of Pramana*. Prajnakaragupta was an important master of the *Pramana* teachings.

The promise to compose the text from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* reads:

*In order to establish pramana, I will herewith compose one [text] as a
compendium
Of all my [other] texts that provided various scattered explanations.*

Some scholars explain that Gyaltsab Je intentionally cited Prajnakaragupta's promise to compose the text instead of Dignaga's in order to indicate that the explanations Prajnakaragupta provides in his commentary accord with those given by Dignaga in the *Compendium of Pramana*.

In brief, the meaning of this [verse] is as follows: The first half presents the homage and the second half the promise to compose [the text]. The homage praises the teacher [Buddha Shakyamuni] for both his excellent causes and his excellent results. The excellent causes are twofold: (a) excellent intention and (b) excellent application. [Excellent] intention refers to great compassion that wishes to completely benefit beings. [Excellent] application refers to "the teacher": [an awareness] familiarizing itself, for the sake of others, with the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Gyaltsab Je explains that Dignaga pays homage to Buddha Shakyamuni by way of praising the Buddha's excellent causes and results. The excellent causes he cites are (a) intention and (b) application. In general, excellent intention refers to the proper motivation for becoming a Buddha; the motivation that focuses on the benefit of sentient beings, while excellent application refers to engaging in the actual practices impelled by that motivation.

Here, excellent intention is more specifically explained to refer mainly to great compassion. Great compassion is a mental factor that is defined as a loving attitude wishing for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Yet, as explained below, excellent intention also refers to Bodhicitta, great love, and so forth.

Excellent application, which is called "teacher", here refers mainly to the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a practitioner who aspires to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. The Buddha, who teaches selflessness perfectly, is the actual teacher. But since the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a Mahayana practitioner is a cause for becoming a Buddha, the name of the result (teacher) is given to the cause (the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a Bodhisattva).

The reason for giving the name of the result to the cause is that the Buddha attained full enlightenment in dependence on previously having meditated on selflessness (while a Bodhisattva). Also, the main teaching given by the Buddha in order to lead all sentient beings to liberation and Buddhahood is the teaching on selflessness.

Therefore, Lama Tsongkhapa says in his *Praise to Dependent Arising*:

*Since this teaching is not seen in [the works of] others
The title of Teacher is yours alone.*

The Buddha is like a skilled physician who identifies the real underlying cause of a disease and is able to prescribe a treatment that eradicates that cause.

However, excellent application — “the teacher” — also refers to the wisdom realizing impermanence, the wisdom realizing the four noble truths, the practice of the six perfections, and so on.

The words of Dignaga's homage that indicate excellent intention and excellent application are:

... to the one wishing to benefit migrators;
To “the teacher” ...

[Excellent] results are also [twofold]: (a) the excellent own benefit [kaya] and (b) the excellent others' benefit [kaya]. The excellent own benefit [kaya] refers to [the Buddha] being endowed with the three special qualities of “the sugata”, the nature of which is elimination and realization. [The excellent] others' benefit [kaya] refers to [the Rupakaya] which has the quality of protecting migrators by way of teaching others the path [the Buddha] himself has realized.

Having engaged in prolonged and extensive meditation on the excellent intention and the excellent application, practitioners eventually attain the two excellent results of a Buddha: (a) the excellent own benefit kaya; and (b) the excellent others' benefit kaya.

The *excellent own benefit kaya* refers to “the sugata” (*bde bar gshegs pa*; the one gone to bliss / the one arrived at bliss). However, here, “the sugata” does not refer to Buddha Shakyamuni, himself, but to his cessations and realizations. Therefore, “the sugata” is categorized into: (1) *sugata-eliminations*, and (2) *sugata-realizations*. These two constitute the Buddha's excellent own benefit kaya for they are the Buddha's qualities that mainly benefit the Buddha himself.

The Buddha's eliminations and realizations are both called *sugata* (*i.e.*, “the one gone to bliss”/“the one arrived at bliss”) because, owing to the Buddha's irrevocable cessation of all obstructions and the fact that his enlightened mind is able to directly and simultaneously realize *all* phenomena, the Buddha is free from any kind of non-blissful state, *i.e.*, he is free from any type of imperfection.

As mentioned above in the ***Elucidation of the Path to Liberation***, each of the two categories of “the sugata” has three special qualities. The three qualities of *sugata-eliminations* are:

1. Properly eliminated
2. Eliminated without return
3. Completely eliminated

The first quality distinguishes the Buddha's elimination of obstructions from the elimination of coarse afflictions in the continuum of non-Buddhist practitioners. The Buddha has eliminated obstructions properly because his cessations are irrevocable, while the cessations of non-Buddhists are merely temporary.

The second quality distinguishes the Buddha's eliminations from the eliminations of Aryas on the path of learning, such as Arya Hearers and Solitary Realizers, who have only eliminated objects of elimination of the path of seeing. The Buddha has eliminated obstructions without return because, unlike those practitioners, he no longer returns, *i.e.*, takes birth in Samsara under the control of afflictions and contaminated karma.

The third quality distinguishes the Buddha's eliminations from the eliminations in the continuum of Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers. The Buddha has completely eliminated obstructions to liberation and omniscience, while Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers have only eliminated obstructions to liberation.

Non-Buddhists possess none of the three qualities. Hearer and Solitary Realizer Aryas on the path of seeing who have only eliminated objects of elimination of the path of seeing possess the first quality, but not the latter two. Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers possess the first two qualities, but not the last one.

The three qualities of *sugata-realizations* are:

1. Realizing suchness
2. Being stable realizations
3. Realizing completely

The Buddha realizes suchness because he directly realizes the mode of subsistence of the four noble truths. His realizations are stable because his teachings do not contradict valid cognition in the least. Also, the Buddha realizes phenomena completely because he directly realizes the methods that lead to liberation and omniscience together with the results of those methods.

As before, the first quality distinguishes the Buddha's realizations from the realizations of non-Buddhists, the second quality distinguishes them from the realizations of Aryas on the path of learning, and the third from Hearer and Solitary Realizer and Destroyers.

The *excellent others' benefit kaya* refers to the Buddha's Rupakaya. The Rupakaya is classified into the Nirmanakaya and Samboghakaya. These two kayas mainly benefit sentient beings by teaching them what to adopt and what to discard, *i.e.*, by teaching them the methods for attaining liberation and omniscience.

The excellent others' benefit kaya (and thus the Rupakaya) is referred to as "protector" for it protects sentient beings from the obstructions to liberation and omniscience.

The words of Dignaga's homage that indicate the excellent own benefit kaya and the excellent others' benefit kaya are:

...*"the sugata"*, *"the protector"*...."

Therefore, the Buddha, the Bhagavan, who from excellent causes has been generated as *pramana* endowed with the entity of the excellent results of the twofold benefits, is known as "genuine *pramana*".

With the words, "who from excellent causes has been generated as *pramana*", Gyaltsab Je comments on the words, "*To the one who has become pramana*", from Dignaga's homage. These words indicate that the Buddha was at some point an ordinary sentient being, who in dependence on excellent causes gradually attained full enlightenment. This distinguishes the Buddha from a creator God since a creator God is asserted to have always been divine without, at some point, having newly attained such a godly state through listening, contemplating and meditating.

Also, the Buddha is omniscient but not omnipotent; he is unable to bestow happiness or inflict suffering on sentient beings. Instead, he teaches them the methods to attain liberation and omniscience in accordance with their predispositions, aspirations, interests, and so forth.

The Buddha having become a valid cognizer and being known as genuine valid cognizer does not literally mean that the Buddha is a valid cognizer, for a valid cognizer is necessarily a consciousness, whereas the Buddha is a person and thus not a consciousness.

However, the Buddha is called a "valid cognizer" because he is a *valid cognizer being* (*tshad ma'i skye bu*). He is a *valid cognizer being* because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

A valid cognizer is defined as: a knower that is newly non-deceptive. This means that a valid cognizer is an awareness that newly realizes its main object. In other words, it realizes its main object *without* depending on a previous moment of consciousness that realized the same object. Examples of valid cognizers are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table and the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness. Valid cognizers are explained in detail below.

There is a purpose for [calling the second chapter] the “establishment of pramana.” [The purpose is] to attend to migrators who are mistaken with regard to the mode of existence, because they apply an incorrect definition of a valid cognizer, etc., [provided by] faulty logicians.

This paragraph explains the meaning of the two lines that constitute the promise to compose the text:

*Out of love for migrators deceived by faulty logicians,
I will properly explain [the chapter on] the establishment of valid cognition*

The purpose for calling the second chapter, “the chapter on the establishment of *pramana*” or “valid cognition,” is to attend to (or address) those who are mistaken with regard to the mode of existence of phenomena because they do not understand the definition of a valid cognizer. They do not understand the definition because they rely on faulty logicians who are unable to define a valid cognizer correctly.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltzab Je explains the meaning of the two lines of homage from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* and the meaning of the two lines that constitute the promise to compose the text from Prajnakaragupta's *Ornament of Pramana*.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the main topics of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
2. Which words of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* does Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* mainly comment on?
3. Who does Dignaga pay homage to in his *Compendium of Pramana*?
4. What are the two excellent causes?
5. Why are these two *excellent* causes?
6. Why is the wisdom realizing selflessness called *teacher*?
7. What are the two excellent results?
8. What are the two categories of “the sugata”
9. Why is the first excellent result an *own benefit kaya*?
10. Why is the second excellent result an *others' benefit kaya*?
11. Why are the Buddha's cessation and realizations referred to as *sugata* / the one gone to bliss/the one arrived at bliss?
12. What are the three qualities of *sugata-eliminations*?
13. What are the three qualities of *sugata-realizations*?
14. How many of the three qualities of *sugata-eliminations* does a Hinayana Foe Destroyer possess?
15. How many of the three qualities of *sugata-realizations* does a non-Buddhist possess?
16. Why is the second excellent result referred to as “protector”?
17. Is the Buddha a valid cognizer?
18. Why is Buddha Shakyamuni described as, “the one who accomplished valid cognizers”?
19. What is the definition of a valid cognizer?
20. What is the meaning of a *valid cognizer being*?
21. Is a *valid cognizer being* necessarily a Buddha?

THE WAY THE MEANING [OF DIGNAGA'S EXPLANATION] IS ELUCIDATED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE *PRAMANAVARTTIKA*

Under this heading, Gyaltsab Je describes how Dharmakirti elucidates in his *Pramanavarttika* the meaning of Dignaga's two lines of homage.

[The meaning of] the first half of the [first] verse [of the **Compendium of Pramana**] is taught by way of drawing out five factors: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, (c) “the teacher”, (d) “the sugata” and (e) “the protector”. Furthermore, the first [‘the one who has become a valid cognizer’] is the basis of the [four] special qualities that are to be established; the remaining [four] are the special qualities which establish [*the one who has become a valid cognizer*].

As cited above, the first half of the first verse in Dignaga’s **Compendium of Pramana** is:

*To the one who has become a valid cognizer, the one wishing to
benefit migrators,
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector”, I bow down.*

The five factors are:

- a. The one who has become a valid cognizer: a *valid cognizer being*;
- b. The one wishing to benefit migrators: great compassion, etc.;
- c. “The teacher”: the wisdom realizing selflessness, etc.;
- d. “The sugata”: (i) *sugata-eliminations* and (ii) *sugata-realizations*;
- e. “The protector”: the Rupakaya that protects sentient beings by teaching them what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded with regard to the four noble truths

As mentioned above, the main topics of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* are liberation, omniscience and the paths that lead to these states. Dharmakirti presents these topics by way of expounding on the five factors.

Of those five, the last four (the one wishing to benefit migrators, “the teacher”, “the sugata” and “the protector”) establish or prove the first factor; namely, that the Buddha has become a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, that he is a *valid cognizer being*. Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says that the one who has become a valid cognizer is the basis of the four special qualities, *i.e.*, the basis of the last four factors. That basis is the object that is to be established or proved (the *probandum*). The four latter factors are the special qualities which establish or prove that the Buddha is the one who is a *valid cognizer being*.

There are two ways of explaining [the last four factors as proofs of the first factor]: one is by means of the *forward system*, which refers to the explanation that is in accordance with the sequence [of those five] presented in [Dignaga's] verse, while the other is by means of the *reverse system* which is the opposite.

The four latter factors are the proofs (*sgrub byed*), which establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, because they are the correct reasons that prove or establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. Furthermore, there are two ways in which these four serve as proofs or correct reasons: one is by means of the *forward system*, and the other is by means of the *reverse system*.

The *forward system* here refers to the sequence of the five factors as presented in Dignaga's two lines of homage. The sequence of the five according to the *forward system* is: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, (c) “the teacher”, (d) “the sugata” and (e) “the protector”.

As to the way in which the four factors establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*: first, (the second factor) great compassion is established. Thereafter, great compassion

serves as the proof or correct reason that establishes (the third factor) “the teacher”; “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) “the sugata”; “the sugata” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fifth factor) “the teacher”; and “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established (the *probandum*), (the first factor) the *valid cognizer being*. Hence, there are five syllogisms of the *forward system*.

Please note that there are different ways of formulating these syllogisms. The syllogisms cited here are translations of the five syllogisms according to the *forward system* as presented in Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* or in Geshe Wangchen’s³ *The Pervasive Rain of Utpala Flowers of the Eloquent Speech* (*legs bshad utpala’i gru char*)

1. The first syllogism (from Geshe Wangchen’s *Pervasive Rain*) establishes the second factor, great compassion, in dependence on a correct reason that is none of the five factors:

Regarding the subject, effortful (i.e., contrived) affectionate compassion that wishes to liberate all migrators from suffering, if one has familiarized oneself well with that compassion, it can become an effortless (i.e., uncontrived) awareness, because it is a mental quality that has a stable basis and does not depend on repeated concerted efforts once it has become familiar.

The subject of the syllogism is contrived great compassion (“effortful affectionate compassion that wishes to liberate all migrators from suffering”). The predicate of the syllogism is great compassion (“if one has familiarized oneself well with that compassion it can become an uncontrived awareness”). The correct reason is that great compassion is a mental quality that has a stable basis and does not depend on repeated concerted efforts once it has become familiar.

Please note that *contrived* great compassion refers to a type of compassion that does not qualify as actual great compassion because it is not constant and does not arise spontaneously. Actual great compassion is *uncontrived*, for it refers to the constant and spontaneous affection that wants all sentient beings to be free from suffering. However, developing contrived great compassion serves as a stepping-stone to the development of uncontrived great compassion since it precedes the development of the latter.

2. The second syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation*) establishes the third factor, “the teacher”, in dependence on the reason, great compassion (the second factor):

Regarding the subject, affectionate Bodhisattvas on the path of preparation, they initially meditate by means of two types of exertion (intense and continuous exertion) in order to directly perceive the methods to pacify suffering, because they are mundane beings who wish to conquer the suffering of all sentient beings.

The subject of the syllogism is: ‘affectionate Bodhisattvas on the path of preparation’. The predicate of the syllogism is: “the teacher” (“they initially meditate by means of two types of exertion in order to directly perceive the methods to pacify suffering”). The correct reason is great compassion (“they are mundane beings who wish to conquer the suffering of all sentient beings”).

3. The third syllogism (from Geshe Wangchen’s *Pervasive Rain*) establishes the fourth factor, “the sugata”, in dependence on the reason, “the teacher” (the third factor):

³ Geshe Wangchen was a great contemporary master from Drepung Loseling Monastery who passed away in August 2015.

Regarding the subject, the Muni, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he has *sugata-eliminations* in his continuum, because he is a being who, for the benefit of all sentient beings, has perfected familiarization with the application, the wisdom realizing selflessness.

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni. The predicate of the syllogism is “the sugata” (“he has *sugata-eliminations* in his continuum”). The correct reason is “the teacher” (“he is a being who, for the benefit of all sentient beings, has perfected familiarization with the application, the wisdom realizing selflessness”).

4. The fourth syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation*) establishes the fifth factor, “the protector” in dependence on the reason, “the sugata” (the fourth factor):

Regarding the subject, the Muni, the Buddha Bhagavan, he is the protector of those seeking release, because he has perfected the realization of the paths to liberation, and because he unerringly teaches others the paths he has realized without any thought of reward, fame and so forth.

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni. The predicate of the syllogism is “the protector” (“he is the protector of those seeking release”). The correct reason is “the sugata” (“he has perfected the realization of the paths to liberation, and because he unerringly teaches others the paths he has realized without any thought of reward, fame and so forth”).

5. The fifth syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation*) establishes the first factor (the main object to be established, the *probandum*), a *valid cognizer being*, in dependence on the reason, “the protector” (the fifth factor):

Regarding the subject, the Muni, the Buddha Bhagavan, he is a *valid cognizer being* for those seeking release, because he serves as refuge to those seeking release by way of teaching them the paths to liberation, and because he has perfected the ability to protect them.

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni. The predicate of the syllogism is the *valid cognizer being* (“he is a *valid cognizer being* for those seeking release”). The correct reason is “the protector” (“he serves as refuge to those seeking release by way of teaching them the paths to liberation, and because he has perfected the ability to protect them”).

As mentioned above, of the two ways in which the four factors prove that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, the second way is from the point of view of the *reverse system*. The *reverse system* here refers to a sequence of the five factors that is the opposite of the sequence presented in Dignaga’s two lines of homage. This reverse sequence is: (a) “the protector” (b) “the sugata”, (c) “the teacher”, (d) the one wishing to benefit migrators, and (e) the one who has become a valid cognizer.

As to the way in which the four factors of the *reverse system* establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*: first (the first factor) “the protector” is established. Then “the protector” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the second factor) “the sugata”; “the sugata” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the third factor) “the teacher”; “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) great compassion, and great compassion serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established, the *probandum*, (the fifth factor) the *valid cognizer being*.

As before, there are different ways of formulating these syllogisms. The syllogisms cited here are translations of the five syllogisms according to the *reverse system* as presented in Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* or in Khedrup Je’s *Ocean of Reasoning, a Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika*:

The five syllogisms of the *reverse system* are:

1. The first syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation*) establishes the first factor, "the protector", in dependence on a correct reason that is none of the five factors:

Regarding the subject, the Muni, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is a protector of those seeking release, because he has attained perfection with regard to unerringly teaching the mode of existence of the four noble truths to those striving for release.

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is "the protector" ("he is a protector of those seeking release"), and the correct reason is that Buddha Shakyamuni has attained perfection with regard to unerringly teaching the mode of existence of the four noble truths to those striving for release.

2. The second syllogism (from Khedrup Je's *Ocean of Reasoning*) establishes the second factor, "the sugata", in dependence on the reason, "the protector" (the first factor):

Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is endowed with "the sugata" that possesses the three qualities of realizations, because he is the protector who, without depending on another master, teaches all the points and methods of adoption and relinquishment with regard to the four noble truths.

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is "the sugata" ("he is endowed with "the sugata" that possesses the three qualities of realizations"), and the correct reason is "the protector" ("he is the protector who, without depending on another master, teaches all the points and methods of adoption and relinquishment with regard to the four noble truths").

3. The third syllogism (from Khedrup Je's *Ocean of Reasoning*) establishes the third factor, "the teacher", in dependence on the reason, "the sugata" (the second factor):

Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is preceded by the excellent application which, for the welfare of others, familiarized for a long time with the wisdom realizing selflessness, because he obtained the sugata that possesses the three qualities of realizations.

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is "the teacher" ("he is preceded by the excellent application which for the welfare of others, familiarized for a long time with the wisdom realizing selflessness"), and the correct reason is "the sugata" ("he obtained the sugata that possesses the three qualities of realizations").

4. The fourth syllogism (from Khedrup Je's *Ocean of Reasoning*) establishes the fourth factor, great compassion, in dependence on the reason, "the teacher" (the third factor):

Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is preceded by great compassion that wishes to benefit all migrators, because for the welfare of others he perfected prolonged familiarization with the wisdom realizing selflessness.

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is great compassion ("he is preceded by great compassion that wishes to benefit all migrators"), and the correct reason is "the teacher" ("for the welfare of others he perfected prolonged familiarization with the wisdom realizing selflessness").

5. The fifth syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation*) establishes the fifth factor (the main object to be established, the *probandum*), a *valid cognizer being*, in dependence on the reason, great compassion (the fourth factor):

Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he thoroughly accomplished the state of being a *valid cognizer being* which is non-deceptive with regard to those seeking release, because he is the teacher who perfected his own and others' benefit.

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is the *valid cognizer being* ("he thoroughly accomplished the state of being a *valid cognizer being* which is non-deceptive with regard to those seeking release"), and the correct reason is great compassion ("he is the teacher who perfected his own and others' benefit").

Please note that the syllogism that establishes "the sugata" by means of the *forward system* explicitly establishes that the Buddha is endowed with the three qualities of *sugata-eliminations*, while the syllogism that establishes "the sugata" by means of the *reverse system* explicitly establishes that the Buddha is endowed with the three qualities of *sugata-realizations*.

The reason for the two [ways of proving that the Buddha is a valid cognizer] is that [some say]:

*Since there exists no proof
That there are valid cognizers that know hidden phenomena ...*

They argue that becoming familiar with any of the methods for becoming an All-Knowing One, who has become a valid cognizer, is not a cause that gives rise to an omniscient consciousness that is such [a valid cognizer].

Also, [they argue that] there is no reason for [the existence of] an omniscient consciousness as declared, for instance, in the statement: "Such omniscient consciousness exists, because we see its results or nature."

The two lines —

*Since there exists no proof,
That there are valid cognizers that know hidden phenomena ...*

— are from Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The meaning of these words will be explained in more detail below.

Even though the two lines are from the *Pramanavarttika*, they do not express Dharmakirti's position; rather, they articulate two types of wrong view held by some non-Buddhists (mainly by followers of the *Lokayata* and *Mimamsaka* systems). The first refers to the view that (1) there is no omniscient consciousness, because there are no causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness; while the second wrong view is that (2) there is no omniscient consciousness, because there is no correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Like Buddhist philosophers, the non-Buddhists who hold the second wrong view accept that a correct reason that establishes a phenomenon (the predicate) must be either of one nature with the phenomenon or the result of that phenomenon. Therefore, according to those non-Buddhists, if there were (hypothetically) a correct reason that established an omniscient consciousness, it would have to be either of one nature with the omniscient consciousness or the result of the omniscient consciousness. However, they hold that such a correct reason does not exist.

The two wrong views are the reason why Dharmakirti presents two ways to prove that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*: the *forward system* and the *reverse system*.

The *forward system* is set forth in order to refute the first wrong view while the *reverse system* is set forth in order to refute the second [wrong view].

Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system* refutes the first wrong view that there are no causes which give rise to an omniscient consciousness. Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *reverse system* refutes the wrong view that there is no proof or correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Since the excellent intention – great compassion – is the first proof, it is indicated explicitly. [Great compassion is also] representative of Bodhicitta. Furthermore, excellent application – [the awareness that develops] familiarity with the wisdom realizing selflessness for the sake of others – is the main activity. Since that [activity] is representative of the training in generosity, morality, and so forth [they are] indicated [here], too.

Great compassion is the first proof of the Buddha being a *valid cognizer being*, i.e., great compassion is cited as the first correct reason, in dependence on which one establishes that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, because it is the most important awareness practitioners of the Mahayana have to generate initially. Therefore, the words, "the one wishing to benefit migrators" explicitly indicate great compassion. However, these words also indicate Bodhicitta, great love, the special attitude, and so forth since great compassion is representative of Bodhicitta, etc.

Furthermore, the words, "the teacher", explicitly indicate the wisdom realizing selflessness, for it is one of the main awarenesses with which Bodhisattvas familiarize themselves for the benefit of sentient beings. Yet the words also imply the wisdom realizing impermanence, the practice of the perfections of generosity, morality, patience, and so forth, since the wisdom realizing selflessness is representative of these other awarenesses.

The [section on the] first way of explaining [the five factors according to the *forward system*] elucidates the manner in which the teacher arrived [at this goal and] through what paths.

The section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that sets forth the five factors according to the *forward system* describes the different practices in which Bodhisattvas engage to reach the state of a Buddha — the motivation they generate, the various method and wisdom practices, and so forth. Therefore, in dependence on the syllogisms of the *forward system*, one comes to understand the causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness.

The way one comes to such an understanding is as follows: in dependence on the first syllogism cited above one initially realizes great compassion, the loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Based on such a realization, one is able to infer that those who possess great compassion engage tirelessly in the different Mahayana practices for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Also, having reflected on the suffering of sentient beings, one understands that suffering is the result of afflictions and contaminated karma, which in turn are rooted in the ignorance grasping at the self. One realizes that in order to eliminate others' suffering, Bodhisattvas first need to eradicate suffering and its root in their own continuum, which can only be accomplished by cultivating the wisdom realizing selflessness. Hence, it is in dependence on great compassion that one realizes "the teacher", the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Then one comes to understand that the wisdom that initially realizes selflessness conceptually is eventually able to realize selflessness directly. With this direct realization, Bodhisattvas are gradually able to irrevocably eliminate the different layers of the obstructions to liberation and omniscience. Thus, in dependence on the wisdom that realizes selflessness, one is able to realize *sugata-eliminations*.

Thereafter, one comes to understand that the one who has attained the cessation of all shortcomings for the benefit of sentient beings is able to protect sentient beings by teaching them the methods for attaining the same state. This means that in dependence on *sugata-eliminations* one realizes “the protector”.

Eventually, in dependence on “the protector” one realizes that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* free from any type of fault with regard to perfectly teaching what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded. Therefore, by proceeding through these steps of realization one comes to understand that the Buddha is not a permanent naturally-arisen being, like a creator God, but that he became a *valid cognizer being* by — prior to attaining enlightenment — progressively cultivating and familiarizing himself with the causes for enlightenment, such as great compassion, the wisdom realizing selflessness, and so on. In this way, one refutes the above-mentioned assertion that the omniscient mind of the Buddha does not have any causes.

The [section on the] second way [of presenting the five factors according to the *reverse system*] first delineates the four [noble] truths. Then, having established through [correct] signs that the Buddha has excellent realizations, and from that, that [certain] causes must precede [Buddhahood], [this section] indicates the correct reason [that establishes] how [the Buddha] has arrived [at his goal] in dependence on these paths.

The section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that explains the five factors according to the *reverse system* first expounds on the four noble truths. Then, by means of citing two correct signs or syllogisms, it establishes that the Buddha possesses excellent realizations. As mentioned before, the first syllogism establishes that the Buddha is “the protector” who unerringly teaches the four noble truths.

The second syllogism proves, in dependence on “the protector”, that the Buddha possesses the three qualities of *sugata-realizations*.

The third and fourth syllogisms establish that the Buddha is preceded by particular causes. The third syllogism proves, in dependence on *sugata-realizations*, that the Buddha is preceded by “the teacher”, the wisdom realizing selflessness. The fourth syllogism establishes, in dependence on “the teacher”, that the Buddha is preceded by great compassion.

Therefore, in dependence on these syllogisms one comes to understand that — contrary to the assertion of some non-Buddhists — there are correct reasons that prove the existence of the omniscient consciousness.

The way one comes to such an understanding is as follows:

By relying on the second section, which explains the five factors according to the *reverse system*, one initially realizes what the Buddha chiefly teaches: the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path. Having thoroughly understood these, one examines the person who first introduced the four truths — the Buddha himself — and comes to realize “the protector”.

One understands that the Buddha taught the four noble truths through his own power, because without depending on other masters he incontrovertibly realized the nature of these truths. Hence, in dependence on “the protector”, one realizes his *sugata-realizations*.

When examining *sugata-realizations*, one comes to understand that these realizations have not existed naturally since beginningless time, but that they were cultivated by meditating on the wisdom realizing selflessness. Thus, in dependence on *sugata-realizations*, one realizes that the Buddha was preceded by “the teacher”, *i.e.*, that he was preceded by the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Then one comes to understand that familiarizing himself with this wisdom while accumulating merit for three countless eons was only possible because — prior to

becoming a Buddha, as a Bodhisattva — he was motivated by the affectionate awareness that is unable to bear sentient beings' suffering. Therefore, in dependence on “the teacher”, one realizes that the Buddha was preceded by the cultivation of great compassion.

Eventually, in dependence on great compassion, one realizes that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

In brief, under this heading, Gyaltsab Je provides a summary of the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* by explaining how it reveals the meaning of Dignaga's homage through setting forth the five factors. The five factors are set forth by way of four factors (the one wishing to benefit migrators, “the teacher”, “the sugata”, and “the protector”) serving as proofs or correct reasons that establish the fifth factor: that the Buddha is the *one who has become a valid cognizer, i.e., that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being*.

Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in dependence on the four factors is divided in two: (1) establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system* and (2) establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *reverse system*.

Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system* removes the wrong view that there are no causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness; while establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *reverse system* removes the wrong view that there is no correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Therefore, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* can be divided into two sections: (1) the first proves that the Buddha is a valid cognizer by means of the *forward system*; and (2) the second proves that the Buddha is a valid cognizer by means of the *reverse system*.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the five factors that appear in the homage of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*?
2. Of the five factors, which one is the object to be proved or established and which one is the proof?
3. What are the two systems that prove/establish the *valid cognizer being*?
4. What is the reason for presenting these two systems?
5. How many syllogisms are presented in the section on the forward system?
6. How many syllogisms are presented in the section on the reverse system?
7. Why do the words, “the one wishing to benefit migrators”, explicitly indicate great compassion?
8. Why do the words, “the teacher” explicitly indicate the wisdom realizing selflessness?
9. How do the syllogisms of the forward system refute the wrong view that there is no cause of an omniscient consciousness?
10. How do the syllogisms of the reverse system refute the wrong view that there is no reason for an omniscient consciousness?

[DIGNAGA AND DHARMAKIRTI'S] VIEW

In order to accomplish the goal to which they resolutely aspire, those seeking release establish that the Teacher, the Bhagavan, is a valid cognizer by means of establishing that his teachings are faultless.

In order to be able to attain their goals, those seeking release (*i.e.*, liberation or Buddhahood) need to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. Realizing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is necessary in order to rely effectively on the Buddha, engage in continuous practice of his teachings, and eventually attain liberation or Buddhahood.

The understanding that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is attained when one realizes that he is without fault. Yet, realizing that the Buddha is without fault must be preceded by realizing that his teachings are faultless.

In general, the Buddha's teachings can be categorized into scriptural teachings and experiential teachings. Scriptural teachings refer to the words of the Buddha that convey his teachings, while experiential teachings refer to the meaning these words express.

Therefore, the way one arrives at the realization that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is as follows: First, one realizes that the experiential teachings of the Buddha are faultless; in dependence on that, one realizes that the scriptural teachings of the Buddha are faultless; and in dependence on that, one realizes that the Buddha himself is without fault — which is equivalent to realizing that he is a *valid cognizer being*.

[Someone:] It follows that it is pointless to establish that the Muni is a valid cognizer in order to accomplish a person's desired goals, because [goals] are accomplished through direct and inferential valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, valid cognizers can be categorized into: (a) direct valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are direct perceivers) and (b) inferential valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are inferential cognizers).

Direct valid cognizers are non-conceptual knowers that are newly non-deceptive. Examples of direct valid cognizers are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table, a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness and an omniscient consciousness.

Inferential valid cognizers are conceptual knowers that are newly non-deceptive and arise in dependence on a correct reason. Examples of inferential valid cognizers are the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that there is fire on a mountain pass, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that sound is impermanent, and the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness.

Here someone presents the argument that it is pointless to establish that the Muni, *i.e.*, the Buddha, is a *valid cognizer being* in order to accomplish one's goals, because such goals can be attained by relying on direct or inferential valid cognizers that realize the four noble truths, impermanence, selflessness, and so forth, without having to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

[Response:] The Muni is not established to be a valid cognizer for the sake of accomplishing just any goal, but in order to show that the Muni is a valid cognizer with regard to the methods for [attaining] high rebirths and the definite good.

The response to the argument above is that even though it may be possible to accomplish certain goals merely by relying on direct and inferential valid cognizers, the Buddha is not established to be a *valid cognizer being* in order to accomplish just any goal. Rather, he is established to be a *valid cognizer being* in order to prove that he is a *valid cognizer being*.

with regard to the methods for attaining high rebirths and definite good ('definite good' refers to liberation or Buddhahood).

The Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* with regard to the methods for attaining high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood because he is able to perfectly teach the methods for attaining those states.

[Someone:] Even if it is for the sake of those goals, it [still] follows that it is pointless to establish that the Muni is a valid cognizer, because you accept that past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are established by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact.

The opponent replies that even if one aspires to attain goals such as high rebirths, liberation or Buddhahood, it is nonetheless pointless to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are only slightly hidden phenomena that can be realized by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact. By means of realizing past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., one comes to realize the existence of high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood.

Having realized high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood one is then able to engage in the practices that lead one to attain either of these states without having to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

[Response:] There is no fault. Without initially relying on the teachings of the Blessed One, one will not even think of selflessness or momentariness of the subtle, not to mention realizing them inferentially. When those possessing discernment initially see that the Blessed One uninterruptedly taught that high rebirths, definitive goodness and the reasons establishing these are connected to worldly valid cognizers, they will thoroughly investigate whether what is taught [by the Buddha] really exists or not, and they will realize inferentially the mode [of existence of higher rebirths, definite goodness, etc.].

The response here is that there is no fault with regard to asserting that past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are realized by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact. However, one can realize these slightly hidden phenomena (in particular the four noble truths) only by relying on the Buddha's teachings.

Without listening to and contemplating the teachings of the Buddha, one will not even be able to reflect on, for instance, selflessness or *momentariness of the subtle*,⁴ not to mention realizing them with an inferential cognizer. This is because the teachings on selflessness are unique to the teachings of the Buddha.

Furthermore, whatever is taught by the Buddha, such as high rebirths, liberation, etc., connects to worldly everyday valid cognition. When those possessing discernment understand this, they will thoroughly investigate the Buddha's teachings and attain inferential realization of the mode of existence of higher rebirths, liberation, and so forth.

Some scholars explain that here Gyaltsab Je agrees that it not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to *realize* hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood; although in order to realize liberation and Buddhahood, it is necessary to rely on listening to and contemplating the Buddha's teachings. Furthermore, those

⁴ Some scholars explain that here 'momentariness of the subtle' refers to: 'impermanence *that is characterized by selflessness*' (with 'the subtle' referring to selflessness). In order to realize *impermanence that is characterized by selflessness* on the basis of, for instance, a person, one first generates an awareness realizing the person's selflessness, and then an awareness realizing the person's impermanence. The later awareness realizing the person's *impermanence* is the awareness realizing the person's *impermanence that is characterized by selflessness*, for its realization of the person's impermanence is enhanced by the earlier awareness (realizing the person's selflessness). Therefore, even though the earlier awareness lies dormant at the time of the later awareness, nonetheless, it affects the later awareness, which is why the later awareness is said to be 'conjoined with' the earlier awareness.

possessing discernment are able to comprehend that the Buddha repeatedly taught that hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood connect to worldly everyday things (which are easy to understand), and through thorough analysis, they are able to realize these hidden phenomena.

According to those scholars, that response implies that even though it is not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to *realize* or understand liberation or Buddhahood, it is necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to *attain* liberation or Buddhahood. The reason is that unless practitioners of the Buddha Dharma realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, they will not be able to cultivate the type of firm and unwavering faith in the Buddha required to follow his instructions and practice over countless lifetimes, and even eons, until they attain their goals.

In brief, under this heading, Gyaltsab Je explains that those seeking release need to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to be able to engage in effective and continuous practice and eventually attain liberation or Buddhahood. However, before being able to realize that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being, *i.e.*, that he is without fault, they need to realize that his teachings are faultless.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Is it necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to realize hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood?
2. Why does one have to rely on the Buddha's teachings in order to realize liberation and Buddhahood?
3. Does one have to rely on the Buddha's teachings in order to realize selflessness or subtle impermanence?
4. Why do those seeking release have to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to attain liberation or Buddhahood?
5. What are the steps that lead to the realization that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*?
6. What is the opponent's main reason why it is not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to attain liberation or omniscience?
7. What is the meaning of experiential teachings?
8. What is the meaning of scriptural teachings?
9. Does one have to realize that *all* the teachings of the Buddha are faultless in order to be able to realize that he is a *valid cognizer being*?
10. By realizing that some of the Buddha's teachings are faultless one is able to realize that the Buddha is faultless with regard to those teachings. But how is one able to realize that the Buddha is faultless with regard to all of his teachings?

THE MEANING OF THE BRANCHES

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Proving that the Muni is *pramana*
- (2) The purpose of praising [the Muni] on account of [being] *pramana*.

PROVING THAT THE MUNI IS PRAMANA

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Showing by means of the forward system the manner in which the teacher arrived [at his goal] through what paths
- (2) Showing by means of the reverse system the reason for the Buddha having arrived [at his goal]

SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE FORWARD SYSTEM THE MANNER IN WHICH THE TEACHER ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL] THROUGH WHAT PATHS

This marks the beginning of the first section, which proves that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system*. Thus, it also marks the beginning of Gyaltsab Je explaining the verses of the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika*.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying the instance of a *pramana being* by way of explaining the meaning of 'the one who has become a valid cognizer'
- (2) Identifying the definition of a *pramana being* by way of explaining the four remaining [factors]
- (3) Identifying the paths that lead to [the state of being a *pramana being*].

IDENTIFYING THE INSTANCE OF A PRAMANA BEING BY EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF THE ONE WHO HAS BECOME PRAMANA

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The general definition of *pramana*
- (2) Showing that the Muni also possesses that definition (*i.e.*, that the Muni is a *pramana being* or that he possesses *pramana*)

THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF PRAMANA

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The nature of the definition
- (2) The attribute

THE NATURE OF THE DEFINITION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The definition
- (2) The instances
- (3) Ascertaining that the instances [satisfy] the definition

THE DEFINITION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying *Non-Deceptive*
- (2) Dispelling [the objection of] non-pervasion (*i.e.*, refuting the objection that the definition of *pramana* is too narrow)
- (3) Dispelling [the view of a] broad pervasion (*i.e.*, refuting the objection that the definition is too broad)

IDENTIFYING NON-DECEPTIVE

[Someone:] The realization of objects of comprehension — high rebirths, the definite good and the methods [that lead to those goals] — depends on valid cognizers. If only the Muni is a *pramana* with regard to [realizing] those objects in their entirety, what is the definition of a general *pramana* which is such that by satisfying that definition [a consciousness] becomes a *pramana*?

Here someone asks, if the realization of goals such as high rebirths, liberation, Buddhahood and the paths that lead to these states depend on *pramana* or valid cognizers, and if only the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* (while non-Buddhist teachers, etc., are not), what is the definition of a valid cognizer?

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*.]

Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness

[Response:] Regarding the subject, a direct *pramana* apprehending blue, it is ***pramana*** (*i.e.*, a valid cognizer), because it **is a consciousness** that is newly **non-deceptive**.

The definition of a *pramana* is: a consciousness or knower that is newly non-deceptive. As mentioned above, 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' refers to an awareness that newly realizes its main object.

Therefore, the subject, a consciousness that is newly non-deceptive with regard to blue, it is a valid cognizer because it is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'. It is newly non-deceptive with regard to blue because it newly realizes its main object, blue.

[Someone:] If a consciousness is a *pramana*, it follows that it is pointless to present the definition of *pramana* in the commentaries, because when a self-knower perceives a consciousness, it also perceives the non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with [the consciousness].

The argument presented here mentions a type of awareness called "self-knower". Followers of the Sautrantika, Chittamatra, and Yogachara-Svatantrika schools of Buddhism propound the existence of self-knowers, and since the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is presented from the point of view of the Sautrantika Following Reasoning, self-knowers are asserted here.

According to Buddhist philosophers who accept self-knowers, there are two types of consciousness: (a) other-knowers and (b) self-knowers.

An other-knower is an awareness that is "directed outwards" and perceives phenomena other than a consciousness that is of one nature with itself. Examples are the five sense direct perceivers and conceptual consciousnesses.

A self-knower is a mental consciousness that directly perceives an awareness that is of one nature with itself. Examples of self-knowers are a self-knower that perceives an eye consciousness apprehending a tree, a self-knower that perceives an ear consciousness

apprehending a song, a self-knower that perceives an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness, and so forth.

All awarenesses have a self-knower. That self-knower is simultaneous and of one substantial entity or of one nature with the awareness it perceives. The self-knower is simultaneous with the awareness it perceives, for the self-knower and the awareness it perceives arise and go out of existence simultaneously. Also, they are of one substantial entity or of one nature because the self-knower and the awareness it perceives are different aspects of the same consciousness. This means that one part of the awareness (the other-knower) is "directed outwards", for it apprehends phenomena such as shapes, colours, sounds, etc., while the other part (the self-knower) is "directed inwards" and perceives the other-knower.

The self-knower of an eye consciousness apprehending a tree, for instance, is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the eye consciousness apprehending the tree. Unlike the sense consciousness it perceives, it is not a sense consciousness but a mental direct perceiver that perceives *the eye consciousness apprehending the tree*. Therefore, the self-knower of the eye consciousness apprehending the tree is a mental consciousness that is a direct perceiver, for it directly realizes its main object, the *eye consciousness apprehending the tree*. It is not self-awareness or introspection and plays only a small role in spiritual practice.

Likewise, the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness has a self-knower that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity or of one nature with the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness. That self-knower is a mental direct perceiver that directly realizes its main object, the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness.

The reason for asserting self-knowers is to explain the memory of perception. When our eye consciousness has perceived a tree, later on we are able to remember the tree. The memory of the tree is possible owing to our eye consciousness having previously seen the tree.

But not only are we able to remember the tree, we are also able to remember that we *saw* the tree. That memory is the result of the self-knower that perceived the eye consciousness apprehending the tree. Thus, self-knowers are responsible for the memory of *perceiving* something.

The analogy used for a self-knower is a lamp that illuminates itself (self-knower) while it also illuminates other phenomena (other-knower).

Returning to the argument presented here: it concerns self-knowers that perceive valid cognizers (since every valid cognizer has a self-knower that perceives it). When a self-knower perceiving a valid cognizer realizes its main object — the valid cognizer — it also realizes the *non-deceptiveness* of the valid cognizer that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knower, because it realizes the valid cognizer that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knower. It realizes the non-deceptiveness of the valid cognizer because it realizes the defining functions (or characteristics) of that valid cognizer. Therefore, the self-knower realizes the definition of the valid cognizer, *i.e.*, it realizes 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'.

This is why the opponent argues that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the commentaries of the *Pramana* literature, for everyone already *knows* the definition of a valid cognizer. Everyone knows the definition of a valid cognizer because many of our awarenesses are valid cognizers, and since each of those valid cognizers has its own self-knower, every one of those self-knowers realizes the defining functions of the valid cognizer it perceives. Since the self-knower realizes the defining functions of the valid cognizer it perceives, it also realizes the definition of the valid cognizer it perceives (*i.e.*, it realizes "a knower that is newly non-deceptive"). Thus, many of our self-knowers have realized the definition of a valid cognizer, which is why we already know the definition of a valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

[If] *being able to perform a function abides:*
Non-deceptive....

[Response:] Regarding the subject, objects of knowledge, it does not follow that [a self-knower] fully realizes [that the *pramana* the self-knower perceives] is non-deceptive merely by experiencing the nature [of that *pramana*], because if **being able to perform the functions** of [for instance] cooking, scorching, etc., **abides** the way it is comprehended [by a *pramana* apprehending a fire, that *pramana*] is **non-deceptive** with regard to these functions. However, there is no certainty [that the self-knower perceiving the *pramana* apprehending the fire realizes that the *pramana* apprehending the fire is non-deceptive] merely by experiencing the nature [of that *pramana*].

Our own system's response to the argument above is that in general, a *pramana* realizing fire is non-deceptive with respect to the defining functions the fire is able to perform, such as cooking, scorching, etc. Likewise, the self-knower that perceives that valid cognizer realizing fire is non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of that valid cognizer, and thus with regard to the definition of the valid cognizer.

However, there are some exceptions, for there are self-knowers that realize the general nature of a valid cognizer without realizing that valid cognizer completely with its defining functions, to the extent of being able to identify it as a valid cognizer and therefore as non-deceptive.

For example, followers of the non-Buddhist *Lokayata* or *Charvaka* system only assert the existence of *direct* valid cognizers; they do not assert the existence of *inferential* valid cognizers, although inferential valid cognizers do arise in their mental continuum. Followers of the *Lokayata* system do not assert the existence of inferential valid cognizers, for they contend that only direct perceivers are able to realize an object; they do not accept that it is possible to realize an object in dependence on correct reasons.

When an inferential valid cognizer realizing the presence of fire on a mountain pass arises in the continuum of a follower of the *Lokayata*, the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the fire, *i.e.*, it realizes the fire. The inferential valid cognizer also realizes the fire's defining functions of, for instance, cooking, scorching, etc. Therefore, the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to these functions.

Furthermore, the self-knower that perceives the inferential valid cognizer realizes the general nature of that valid cognizer, for it realizes the *awareness* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass.

However, since a follower of the *Lokyata* system takes the position that there are no inferential valid cognizers, the self-knower of his inferential valid cognizer does not realize the *inferential valid cognizer* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass. As the self-knower does not realize the *inferential valid cognizer* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass, it does not realize the defining functions (and thus the definition) of that inferential valid cognizer. This means that it does not realize the determinative knower that in dependence on its basis, a correct sign, is newly *non-deceptive* with regard to its object of comprehension, a hidden phenomenon⁵ (*i.e.*, the presence of fire on the mountain pass).

Therefore, the self-knower of that inferential valid cognizer perceives or realizes the general nature of that inferential valid cognizer (*i.e.*, it realizes the *consciousness* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass), but it does not realize that the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the presence of fire on the mountain pass.

⁵ The definition of an *inferential valid cognizer* is: A determinative knower that in dependence on its basis, a correct sign, is newly non-deceptive with regard to its object of comprehension, a hidden phenomenon.

This example illustrates that it is for the sake of those who, on account of holding wrong views, etc., are unable to identify a valid cognizer, that the definition of a valid cognizer is provided in the commentaries of the *Pramana* literature.

In brief, under this outline Gyaltsab Je introduces the definition of a valid cognizer, in particular the aspect of the definition of being “non-deceptive” (“*Pramana is a non-deceptive awareness*”).

An awareness is non-deceptive with regard to a particular object because it realizes the defining functions that object is able to perform. For instance, fire is able to perform the functions of cooking, scorching, etc. Hence, an inferential valid cognizer that realizes fire on a mountain pass is non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of fire (“[If] *being able to perform a function abides: / Non-deceptive ...*”).

But even though, in general, a consciousness perceiving fire is non-deceptive with regard to the fire and the defining functions of fire, and the self-knower of a valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the valid cognizer and the defining functions of the valid cognizer (*i.e.*, it realizes that the valid cognizer is non-deceptive, etc.), nonetheless, owing to various misperceptions, it is necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *pramana* literature.

One of the qualities of a valid cognizer is that it is non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of its main object. By being non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of its main object, a valid cognizer enables the person in whose continuum it arises to obtain a desired object.

For instance, a valid cognizer realizing a camp fire, arising in the continuum of a person who feels cold, enables that person to seek out the fire and warm himself. Likewise a valid cognizer realizing water, arising in the continuum of a person who is thirsty, enables that person to quench his thirst.

On the other hand, a wrong consciousness that wrongly perceives, for instance, a mirage of water to be water does not enable the person to obtain the water.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of a valid cognizer?
2. What is an example of a valid cognizer?
3. What is the meaning of being non-deceptive?
4. What is the meaning of being newly non-deceptive?
5. What is a self-knower?
6. What does a self-knower realize?
7. Why is a self-knower simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the awareness it perceives?
8. What is an other-knower?
9. Why does an opponent argue that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* commentaries?
10. What is the response to the argument that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* commentaries?
11. What type of valid cognizer do the followers of the Lokayata system assert and what type of valid cognizer do they not assert?

DISPELLING [THE OBJECTION OF] NON-PERVASION (*i.e.*, REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION OF A VALID COGNIZER IS TOO NARROW)

[Someone:] Since non-deceptiveness with regard to function has the meaning of obtaining an object, and since no one can obtain a sound, etc., an auditory consciousness does not satisfy the definition.

Here someone objects to Dharmakirti's definition of a valid cognizer, arguing that the definition is too narrow. The definition is too narrow because not all valid cognizers satisfy the definition. Not all valid cognizers satisfy the definition because, according to the opponent, whatever is a valid cognizer is not necessarily 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'. Whatever is a valid cognizer is not necessarily 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' because whatever is a valid cognizer is *not* necessarily non-deceptive. As an example of an awareness that is a valid cognizer but *not* non-deceptive, the opponent cites a valid cognizer that is an auditory consciousness (*e.g.*, an ear consciousness apprehending an explanation by another person).

The opponent asserts that an auditory consciousness is *not* non-deceptive because an auditory consciousness is *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object, sound. An auditory consciousness is *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object, sound, because an auditory consciousness does not enable the person in whose continuum the auditory consciousness arises to obtain the sound.

This argument arises from the opponent's position that a valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of an object only if it enables the person in whose continuum the valid cognizer arises to obtain the object.

For instance, an eye consciousness realizing a book (and thus the functions of the book) is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of the book because the eye consciousness enables the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness arises to obtain or get the book.

However, sound or a flash of lightning are objects one cannot obtain, for they are not tangible and only exist for a short time. Therefore, the opponent holds that an ear consciousness realizing the words of another person and an eye consciousness realizing a flash of lightning are *not* non-deceptive. They are *not* non-deceptive because they are *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of their main object. They are *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of their main objects (the words of the other person and the flash of lightning), because the person in whose continuum these awarenesses arise is unable to obtain the words and the flash of lightning.

In short, even though the opponent contends that the first moment of an ear consciousness realizing the words of another person and the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a flash of lightning are both valid cognizers (since they are awarenesses that newly realize their main object) he asserts that they are not 'knowers that are newly *non-deceptive*' and, therefore, do not satisfy Dharmakirti's definition of a valid cognizer.

Hence, the opponent argues that Dharmakirti's definition is too narrow, for it does not include all valid cognizers.⁶

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

... arisen from sound, too
Because it indicates [its] desired [object]. (1)

[Response:] Regarding the subject, an auditory consciousness that has **arisen from** its apprehended object, **sound**, it is free from the fault of not being suitable to [satisfy the definition of] a *pramana*, **because it** is a consciousness that newly **indicates** (*i.e.*, realizes) its **desired** object of comprehension. The word "**too**" ("... arisen from sound, too") includes a *pramana* that sees a flash of lightning, and so on.

In response to the opponent's argument, our own system cites, 'an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, sound'. 'An auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, sound' refers to an ear consciousness apprehending sound, such as, for instance, the first moment of an ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person.⁷

According to our own system, the subject, the first moment of an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its apprehended object, sound, is free from the fault of not being suitable to satisfy Dharmakirti's definition of a valid cognizer, because it is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object. It is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object because it is a consciousness that newly indicates, *i.e.*, realizes its desired object of comprehension.

In other words, an auditory consciousness, such as the first moment of an ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person, is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' because it newly understands its desired object of comprehension, the words of the other person. The words of the other person are the desired object of comprehension of that ear consciousness because they are the main object the ear

⁶ The opponent's view is similar to the view of some Indian Buddhist scholars, such as Dharmakirti's disciple Shakyabodhi, who hold that an eye consciousness that mistakenly perceives the glow of a jewel to be an actual jewel, and an eye consciousness that perceives a white conch shell to be a yellow conch shell are valid cognizers, for they enable the person in whose continuum these two eye consciousnesses arise to obtain the jewel and the conch shell. Hence according to these scholars, there is a common locus between a valid cognizer and a wrong consciousness (*i.e.*, an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object).

According to our own system this is not correct, for there is no common locus between a valid cognizer and an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object, and thus an eye consciousness perceiving the glow of a jewel to be an actual jewel and an eye consciousness perceiving a yellow conch shell are not accepted to be valid cognizers.

However, this assertion by our own system gives rise to the following debate: Regarding the subject, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the moon, it follows that it is not a valid cognizer, because it is a wrong consciousness. It is a wrong consciousness because it is an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object, the moon. Regarding the subject, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the moon, it follows that it is an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object, the moon, because it perceives a perfectly round and small moon, while in reality the moon is neither perfectly round nor small.

⁷ An ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person is an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, sound, because it is an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, the words of another person. The words of the other person are the *apprehended object* of that ear consciousness because the words of the other person are the *observed object condition* of that ear consciousness. The *apprehended object* (*gzung don*) of an awareness and the *observed object condition* (*dmigs skyen*) of an awareness are equivalent (*i.e.*, they are different terms for the same referent object).

The *observed object condition* of an awareness refers to an object that is both (1) the direct (*i.e.*, immediately preceding) cause that gives rise to the awareness and (2) the appearing object of that awareness.

In the case of the ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person, the words of the other person are the *observed object condition* of the ear consciousness because they are (1) the direct (*i.e.*, immediately preceding) cause that gives rise to the ear consciousness and (2) the appearing object of that ear consciousness.

consciousness comprehends or realizes, and because the person in whose continuum the ear consciousness arises wants to hear those words.

Therefore, in order for an awareness to be non-deceptive with regard to its main object, the person in whose continuum the awareness arises does not have to be able to obtain the object; it is sufficient for the awareness to realize the object that the person, in whose continuum the awareness arises, wants to hear.

In the *Pramanavarttika*, the word “too” in the line, “... arisen from sound, too” includes, for instance, the first moment of an eye consciousness perceiving a flash of lightning. As before, even though the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness arises is unable to obtain the flash of lightning, the eye consciousness is nonetheless ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ because it newly realizes its desired object of comprehension, the flash of lightning.

[Someone:] Since the shastras are *pramana* with regard to all objects of knowledge, one is able to accomplish one’s desired goals. What, then, is the use of establishing that the Muni is a *pramana* [being]?

As mentioned before, in a Buddhist context, *pramana* is a Sanskrit term that is usually translated as “valid cognizer”. However, since this second opponent’s argument reflects the view of the non-Buddhist Vedanta system, this translation is not appropriate.

Traditional Vedanta considers scriptural evidence as the most authentic means of knowledge, while direct perception and inferential cognition are considered to be subordinate. According to the Vedantists, the shastras, *i.e.*, the spiritual treatises such as the Vedas, are *pramana* with regard to all objects of knowledge, for they are the most authentic and valid source of knowledge.

Along the same lines, the opponent argues here that it is not necessary to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, since the Buddhist shastras or treatises are the most valid source of knowledge and therefore *pramana*. Hence, by understanding that high rebirths and definite good (*i.e.*, liberation or Buddhahood) were taught in the Buddhist treatises, one is able to realize and eventually attain high rebirths, liberation or Buddhahood.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*The objects the speaker does [wish to express],
Some entity is fully clear to the awareness,
[Expressive] sound with regard to those is pramana,
Not a cause-possessing [reason] of the very entities. (2)*

[Response:] It follows that the expressive sounds (*i.e.*, the words) of the treatises, etc., are **not** a correct **cause-possessing** resultant reason that brings forth understanding of high rebirths, definite good, and so forth, which are the **very entities** expressed [by those words], because expressive **sound with regard to those** (high rebirths and definite good) **is pramana**, that is, a correct reason, which — [based on the syllogism’s subject that is] the basis of the property of the subject — brings forth understanding in the listener’s **awareness of some fully clear entity** [with regard to] **the objects** of engagement the **speaker does** wish to express.

Alternatively, the meaning of the former text [passage] can be applied so as to accord with the latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound.

Our own system's response to the opponent's argument is that it is not sufficient to understand that high rebirths, etc., are taught in the Buddhist treatises⁸, because the expressive sounds, *i.e.*, the words of the treatises that teach high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood, cannot be cited as a correct reason that establishes the existence of high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood. This is because, in general, a word cannot be cited as a correct reason in order to establish the object or entity expressed by the word.

For instance, the word "table" expresses table but it does not establish the existence of a table. Therefore, the following is an incorrect syllogism:

Regarding the subject, in a classroom in which someone utters the word "table", there is a table because there is the word "table".

This is an incorrect syllogism because the reason of the syllogism (the word "table") is neither of one nature with the predicate of the syllogism (table) nor the result of that predicate.

Please note that one of the criteria of a correct syllogism is that the reason of the syllogism must either be of one nature with the predicate of the syllogism or the result of that predicate. If the reason does not relate to the predicate by way of being of one nature with it or by way of being its result, the reason cannot logically establish the predicate. Hence, the word "table" cannot logically establish a table.

Similarly, the following is an incorrect syllogism:

Regarding the subject, high rebirths and definite good, they exist, because the treatises that teach them exist.

The words of the Buddhist treatises that teach high rebirths and definite good are neither of one nature with high rebirths and definite good nor their result. Therefore, those treatises cannot be cited as a correct reason that establishes the existence of high rebirths and definite good. In other words, it is not possible to establish high rebirths, liberation, etc., by arguing that they exist because they are taught in the Buddhist scriptures.

Gyaltsab Je formulates this response in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* by saying, "It follows that the expressive sounds (*i.e.*, the words) of the treatises, etc., are **not** a correct **cause-possessing** resultant reason that brings forth understanding of high rebirths, definite good, and so forth, which are the **very entities** expressed [by those words]" (p. 35).

This means that the words of the treatises that teach high rebirths, etc., are not a correct resultant reason that establishes the actual entities that are expressed by these words, namely high rebirths, definite good, etc.

Here a 'cause-possessing resultant reason' is a specific type of reason, called a "resultant reason". A resultant reason refers to the reason of a syllogism that is the result of the predicate of that same syllogism.⁹

As mentioned above, for a reason to be the correct reason of a syllogism it must either be of one nature with the syllogism's predicate or the result of that predicate. Here, by saying that the words of the treatises are not a 'cause-possessing resultant reason' that establishes the objects expressed by the words, Gyaltsab Je states, explicitly, that the

⁸ A Buddhist treatise is a reliable commentary on the Buddhist teachings. Also, please note that sutras, treatises, etc., refer to the spoken words they contain — the expressive sounds — and not to the printed pages.

⁹ For instance, smoke is a resultant reason of the following syllogism:

Regarding the subject, on a smoky mountain pass, there is fire because there is smoke.

Smoke is the resultant reason of that syllogism because it is the result of the predicate of that syllogism, fire.

words of the treatises are not the result of the objects they express and, implicitly, that they are not of one nature with the objects they express.

Our own system then continues the response to the opponent's argument by saying that even though expressive sounds cannot serve as a correct reason that establishes the objects expressed by those words, expressive sounds serve as a correct reason that establishes that the speaker of the expressive sounds has the motivation to say those words.

Therefore, the following is considered to be a correct syllogism:

Regarding the subject, the expressive sound "table" that is uttered by John, its speaker (i.e., John) has the motivation to say "table", because it is the expressive sound "table".

In this case, the reason, the expressive sound "table", is that syllogism's correct reason because it is a correct resultant reason that establishes that the speaker of the expressive sound "table" has the motivation to say "table".

The expressive sound "table" is the *resultant* reason of that syllogism because it is the result of the predicate, i.e., the speaker's motivation to say "table". The expressive sound "table" is the result of the speaker's motivation to say "table" because an expressive sound is necessarily preceded by its cause, the speaker's motivation to express the sound.

Similarly, the following is considered to be a correct syllogism:

Regarding the subject, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, definite good, etc., its speaker has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, definite good, etc., because it is expressive sound that presents high rebirths, definite good, etc.

As before, the reason of the syllogism (i.e., expressive sound that sets forth high rebirths, definite good, etc.) is a correct resultant reason that establishes that the speaker of the treatise has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, definite good, etc.

This is essentially what Gyalsab Je explains when he says, "expressive **sound with regard to those** (high rebirths and definite good) **is *pramana***, that is, a correct reason, which — [based on the syllogism's subject that is] the basis of the property of the subject — brings forth understanding in the listener's **awareness of some fully clear entity** [with regard to] **the objects** of engagement the **speaker does** wish to express" (p. 35).

In other words, Gyalsab Je says that expressive sound that sets forth high rebirths, definite good, and so forth, is *pramana*, i.e., a correct reason which — based on the syllogism's subject, i.e., a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, definite good, etc., — establishes in the mind of the person listening to the treatise some fully clear entity, i.e., the speakers' motivation with regard to the objects of engagement (i.e., high rebirths, definite good, etc.) that the speaker wishes to express.

Here "*pramana*" means a correct reason; "the basis of the property of the subject" refers to the subject of the syllogism; and "some fully clear entity with regard to the objects of engagement that the speaker does wish to express" refers to the speaker's motivation to express high rebirths, definite good, etc.

However, some scholars disagree with the two syllogisms above, since they hold that expressive sound is *not* necessarily preceded by the speaker's motivation to express the sound. As an example, they cite a person who intends to say "chair" but says "table" by mistake. In this case, the expressive sound "table" is not preceded by the motivation to say "table", but by the motivation to say "chair".

Therefore, according to these scholars: whatever is the expressive sound "table" is not necessarily preceded by its cause, the speaker's motivation to say "table"; and whatever is expressive sound that sets forth high rebirths, definite good, etc., is not necessarily preceded by the speaker's motivation to present high rebirths, etc. Instead, these scholars

assert that only expressive sound that is *free from the five conditions* is necessarily preceded by the speaker's motivation to express the sound.

The *five conditions* are: (1) saying something owing to being mentally ill, (2) saying something while being asleep, (3) saying something out of familiarity, (4) repeating something after someone, and (5) saying something by mistake.

Thus, according to these scholars, the following are correct syllogisms:

Regarding the subject, the expressive sound "table" that is uttered by John and is free from the five conditions, its speaker has the motivation to say "table", because it is the expressive sound "table" that is free from the five conditions.

and:

Regarding the subject, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, definite good, etc., its speaker has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, definite good, etc., because it is expressive sound presenting high rebirths, definite good, etc., which is free from the five conditions.

Some scholars argue that whatever is expressive sound that is free from the five conditions is not necessarily preceded by the motivation to express the sound, because the words of the Buddha are expressive sounds that are free from the five conditions but they are not preceded by the Buddha's motivation to speak these words. They are not preceded by the Buddha's motivation to speak these words because a motivation is necessarily a conceptual consciousness whereas a Buddha has overcome all conceptual consciousnesses.

In reply to this argument, other scholars allege either that the words of the Buddha are not expressive sounds or that a motivation is not necessarily a conceptual consciousness.

However, these are only minor disagreements which, although often debated, do not contradict our own system's above-mentioned response to the opponent who asserts that it is not necessary to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because Buddhist treatises are *pramana*.

With this response, our own system further establishes that there is: a valid cognizer that has arisen from the correct reason, sound. An example of this type of valid cognizer is the inferential valid cognizer realizing the main 'object to be established' (the *probandum*) of the following syllogism:

Regarding the subject, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, etc., its speaker has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc., because it is expressive sound presenting high rebirths, etc.

In other words, an example of 'a valid cognizer that has arisen from the correct reason, sound' is the inferential valid cognizer realizing that "the speaker of a Buddhist treatise which teaches high rebirths, etc., has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc."

That inferential valid cognizer is 'a valid cognizer that has arisen from the correct reason, sound' because it is an inferential valid cognizer that has arisen from its cause, the correct reason of the above-mentioned syllogism, "expressive *sound* presenting high rebirths, etc."

"Expressive sound presenting high rebirths, etc." is the cause of that valid cognizer, because the valid cognizer has come to realize that "the speaker of a Buddhist treatise which teaches high rebirths, etc., has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc." in dependence on contemplating the correct reason, "expressive sound presenting high rebirths, etc."

Consequently, according to our own system, there are two types of valid cognizer that have arisen from sound: (1) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *apprehended object*, sound; and (2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound.

The first type of valid cognizer, '(1) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *apprehended object*, sound' is a *direct* valid cognizer (*i.e.*, a valid cognizer that is a direct perceiver), which is explained above (footnote 7, p. 34). An example of such a valid direct perceiver is the above-mentioned auditory consciousness perceiving the words of another person (p. 34).

Above our own system explained that even though the person in whose continuum such an auditory consciousness arises is unable to obtain the words of the other person, the ear consciousness is, nonetheless, 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' because it newly realizes its desired object of comprehension, the words of the other person.

Alternatively, that same explanation can also be applied to: '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound'.

Hence, Gyaltsab Je says: "Alternatively, the meaning of the former text [passage] can be applied so as to accord with the latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound."

The "former text [passage]" here refers to the following one and a half lines from the *Pramanavarttika*: "... arisen from sound, too / Because it indicates [its] desired [object]."

The "latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound" refers to the latter of the two types of valid cognizers, *i.e.*, '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound'.

The way the former text passage can be applied to the "latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound" is as follows:

Regarding the subject, an inferential valid cognizer that has **arisen from** the correct reason, **sound** (*e.g.*, the above-mentioned inferential valid cognizer realizing that 'the speaker of a Buddhist treatise which teaches high rebirths, etc., has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc.'), it is free from the fault of not being suitable to satisfy the definition of a valid cognizer, because even though the person in whose continuum the valid cognizer arises is unable to obtain the valid cognizer's object of comprehension ('the speaker's motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc.'), nonetheless, the valid cognizer is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' **because it** newly **indicates**, *i.e.*, **realizes** its **desired** object of comprehension.

The object of comprehension is the valid cognizer's *desired* object because it is the object that the person (in whose continuum the valid cognizer arises) wants to realize.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who argues that 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' does not qualify as the definition of a valid cognizer because the definition is too narrow. It is too narrow because, according to this opponent, the meaning of being non-deceptive with regard to the functions of an object is *being able to obtain the object*. Therefore, a valid cognizer that has arisen from sound, for instance, is *not* non-deceptive because it is not possible to obtain sound.

Our own system's response to this debate is that: like a valid cognizer realizing a flash of lightning, '(1) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *apprehended object*, sound' or '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound' is a knower that is newly non-deceptive because it indicates, *i.e.*, realizes, its desired object ("... arisen from sound, too / Because it indicates [its] desired [object]").

In particular, '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound' may be able to realize — in dependence on expressive sound — the motivation to utter some words in the continuum of another person who speaks those words. This is because expressive sound, such as a Buddhist treatise, is *pramana* (*i.e.*, a correct proof or reason) that brings forth understanding in the awareness of the person listening to the treatise of some fully clear entity, *i.e.*, of the motivation of the treatise's speaker, with regard to the objects the speaker wishes to express.

In other words, expressive sound is a correct reason that establishes (for the person listening to the treatise) the speaker's motivation to express whatever the treatise teaches. (*"The objects the speaker does [wish to express], / Some entity is fully clear to the awareness, / [Expressive] sound with regard to those is pramana"*)

However, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, etc., is not a correct cause-possessing, *i.e.*, resultant reason that establishes the very entities it expresses, namely high rebirths, etc., (*"Not a cause-possessing [reason] of the very entities."*)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. According to the first opponent (of this outline), what is the meaning of non-deceptive?
2. How does the opponent's assertion regarding the meaning of non-deceptive lead him to claim that our own system's definition of a valid cognizer is too narrow?
3. How does our own system refute the opponent's claim that our own system's definition is too narrow?
4. What are the two types of valid cognizers that have arisen from sound? Please think of an example for each of them? In what way have the two types arisen from sound?
5. In the *Pramanavartika*, what awareness does the word "too" in the line, "... arisen from sound, too" include?
6. What is the assertion of the second opponent (of this outline), which reflects the view of the non-Buddhist Vedanta system?
7. What is our own system's response to the second opponent?
8. Why is expressive sound not able to serve as a correct reason that establishes what it (*i.e.*, the expressive sound) expresses?
9. Expressive sound is a correct reason of what syllogism? In other words, of what *object that is to be established* (the *probandum*) does expressive sound serve as a correct reason? What is a resultant reason?
10. Is expressive sound necessarily preceded by the motivation to express the sound?
11. What is the meaning of the following sentence from the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, "Alternatively, the meaning of the former text [passage] can be applied so as to accord with the latter [valid cognizer that] has arisen from sound."

DISPELLING [THE VIEW OF A] BROAD PERVASION (i.e., REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION IS TOO BROAD)

[Someone:] It follows that a subsequent cognizer is also *pramana* (i.e., a valid cognizer), because it has non-deceptiveness.

Here someone objects to Dharmakirti's definition of *pramana*, i.e., a valid cognizer, arguing that the definition is too broad. Since Dharmakirti previously only identified a valid cognizer's attribute of being 'non-deceptive' without explicitly mentioning that a valid cognizer must be *newly* non-deceptive [*"Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness"*], the opponent mistakenly believes that the definition of a valid cognizer is 'a knower that is non-deceptive'. However, 'a knower that is non-deceptive' is too broad to serve as the definition of a valid cognizer, for whatever is 'a knower that is non-deceptive' is not necessarily a valid cognizer. In other words, not only valid cognizers but all awarenesses that realize their objects are knowers that are non-deceptive.

For instance, a subsequent cognizer is 'a knower that is non-deceptive'. However, it is not a valid cognizer because it does not *newly* realize its object. A subsequent cognizer does not newly realize its object because it realizes its object in *dependence on* or *through the power* of a former valid cognizer that realized the same object. A subsequent cognizer realizes its object through the power of a former valid cognizer because a subsequent cognizer is induced by that valid cognizer. Therefore, a subsequent cognizer is defined as: 'a knower that is not a valid cognizer and that realizes what has already been realized by a former valid cognizer inducing it'.

A subsequent cognizer can be a sense direct perceiver, a mental direct perceiver or a conceptual consciousness.

Examples of a subsequent cognizer that is a sense direct perceiver are the second moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table, the third moment of an ear consciousness realizing the sound of water, and so forth. The second moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes a table that has already been realized by the *first moment* of the eye consciousness (realizing a table) which induced the second moment of the eye consciousness. Likewise, the third moment of an ear consciousness realizing the sound of water is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes the sound of water that has already been realized by the *first moment* of the ear consciousness (realizing the sound of water) which induced the (second and) third moment.

Examples of a subsequent cognizer that is a mental direct perceiver are the second moment of a self-knower realizing a tongue consciousness apprehending a sandwich, the fourth moment of a yogic direct perceiver realizing that the five aggregates are in the nature of suffering, and so on. They are subsequent cognizers because they realize objects (i.e., a tongue consciousness apprehending a sandwich and that the five aggregates are in the nature of suffering) that have already been realized by a former valid cognizer (the *first moment* of the self-knower realizing the tongue consciousness apprehending a sandwich and the *first moment* of the yogic direct perceiver realizing that the five aggregates are in the nature of suffering) which induced the subsequent cognizers.

Examples of a subsequent cognizer that is a conceptual consciousness are the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing a sprout's impermanence, a memory consciousness realizing the smell of perfume, etc. The second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing a sprout's impermanence is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes the sprout's impermanence that has previously been realized by the *first moment* of the inferential cognizer (realizing the sprout's impermanence) which induced the second moment. Similarly, a memory consciousness realizing the smell of perfume is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes the smell of perfume that has previously been realized by a former moment of a valid cognizer realizing the smell of perfume (for

instance, the first moment of a nose consciousness realizing the smell of perfume) which induced the memory.

Returning to the argument presented here: the opponent contends that it is not correct to assert that ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is the definition of a valid cognizer, for that definition includes awarenesses other than valid cognizers.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since it apprehends the [already] apprehended, a conventional [awareness]
Is not accepted [to be pramana]*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, a **conventional** awareness, a memory, a subsequent cognizer, **it is not accepted** to be *pramana*, **since it** is a consciousness that through memory **apprehends** again an entity already **apprehended** and realized by a former *pramana* that induced [the subsequent cognizer] and has not deteriorated.

Our own system’s response is that a subsequent cognizer, such as a memory consciousness which is a conventional awareness, is not a valid cognizer because it is not ‘a knower that is *newly* non-deceptive’. It is not *newly* non-deceptive because it does not *newly* realize its object. A memory consciousness does not *newly* realize its object because through memory it realizes an entity, *i.e.*, an object that has already been realized by a former valid cognizer that induced the memory and has not deteriorated. The phrase “has not deteriorated” indicates that a subsequent cognizer such as a memory consciousness can only arise as long as the valid cognizer that induced the subsequent cognizer has not deteriorated but lies dormant.

A ‘conventional awareness’ refers to a conceptual consciousness. Therefore, a memory consciousness is described as a ‘conventional awareness’ because it is a conceptual consciousness. The literal meaning of the Sanskrit and Tibetan terms for ‘conventional’ is ‘concealer’. According to the Sautrantika tenet system (which, as mentioned before, is the tenet system on which the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is based), a concealer refers to a conceptual consciousness. A conceptual consciousness is a concealer because it does not apprehend its object directly but through the appearance of a generic image, and thus it ‘conceals’ the direct perception of its object.

Even though our own system does not explicitly explain here that ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is not asserted to be the definition of a valid cognizer, this is implied in the response.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who wrongly believes the definition of a valid cognizer to be ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’. He therefore argues that the definition is too broad, for it also includes awarenesses that are not valid cognizers, such as subsequent cognizers.

Our own system’s response is that a conventional awareness, such as a memory consciousness that is a subsequent cognizer (which satisfies the definition which the opponent wrongly believes to be the definition of a valid cognizer), is not accepted to be *pramana*, *i.e.*, a valid cognizer. It is not accepted to be a valid cognizer because it is a consciousness that through memory apprehends again an object that has already been apprehended by a former valid cognizer that induced the memory and has not deteriorated. (“*Since it apprehends the [already] apprehended, a conventional [awareness] / Is not accepted [to be pramana]*”).

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of a valid cognizer according to our own system?
2. What is the definition of a valid cognizer according to the opponent of this outline?
3. What are subsequent cognizers?
4. What is the difference between a valid cognizer and a subsequent cognizer?
5. Why does the opponent believe that the definition of a valid cognizer is too broad?
6. How does our own system refute the opponent's claim that the definition of a valid cognizer is too broad?
7. What does it mean that a valid cognizer has not deteriorated but lies dormant?
8. What is a memory consciousness?
9. What is a conventional consciousness and why is it a concealer?

THE INSTANCES [OF A VALID COGNIZER]

[Someone:] Since one obtains an entity in dependence on the sense powers, such as the eye [sense powers], and so forth, are [the sense powers] not *pramana*?

The opponent's assertion here reflects the view of the followers of the Vaibhashika tenet school (the Great Exposition School) who hold that the sense powers, such as the eye sense power, the ear sense power, the nose sense power, etc., perceive phenomena. Therefore, according to this opponent, sense powers that enable a person to obtain an object are *pramana* (i.e., valid cognizers).

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*...an awareness is that very pramana,
Because it is the main [cause] regarding the engaging in
Things that are to be adopted and discarded and, (3)
Because if there is that, there is this,
Since on account of an object having different aspects,
There are different realizations by the awarenesses.*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, **an awareness** that is newly non-deceptive by way of taking on the aspect of its object, it is **that very pramana**, because it is a consciousness which mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana* (i.e., valid cognition)

It achieves (a) indirect results through *pramana* **because it is the main cause regarding a person's engaging in** adopting and discarding **the things that are to be adopted and discarded**.

It (i.e., an awareness that is newly non-deceptive) achieves (b) direct results through *pramana*, **because if there is that (pramana), there is this** ability to uninterruptedly posit [other] *pramana* (i.e., valid cognizers) realizing their objects. This is the case **since, on account of [the] different aspects of an object** which are taken on by awarenesses that are able to newly stop superimpositions, one is able to posit **different realizations** [of the different aspects] of the object **by the awarenesses**.

Our own system's response to the opponent's assertion is that *only* an awareness that is newly non-deceptive, by way of taking on the aspect of its object, is that very *pramana*, i.e., a valid cognizer, because it is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana* (i.e., valid cognition).

An awareness that is newly non-deceptive ‘takes on the aspect of its object’ because its object appears to it. For instance, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a car: it is ‘newly non-deceptive, by way of taking on the aspect of’ the car, since the car appears to the eye consciousness when the eye consciousness newly realizes the car.

Here, our own system not only refutes the Vaibhashika assertion that there are sense powers which are valid cognizers but — by mentioning the fact that a valid cognizer newly realizes its object ‘by way of taking on the aspect of its object’ — also refutes another Vaibhashika assertion which is not held by any of the other Buddhist tenet systems. This assertion is that a sense consciousness does not take on the aspect of its object and that objects therefore do not appear to that awareness. Instead, followers of the Vaibhashika contend that a sense consciousness perceives its object nakedly, without taking on the aspect of the object.¹⁰

Followers of the other Buddhist tenet schools (Sautrantika, Chittamatra and Madhyamika) assert that even though an eye consciousness apprehending a car perceives the car directly without depending on the appearance of a generic image of the car, the eye consciousness does not perceive the car nakedly. It does not perceive the car nakedly since the eye consciousness takes on the aspect of the car, *i.e.*, the car appears to the eye consciousness.

Returning to the reason cited by our own system why only an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of the object) is a valid cognizer: only such an awareness is a valid cognizer because it is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana* (*i.e.*, valid cognition).

A newly non-deceptive awareness is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect results through valid cognition, because a valid cognizer is the main cause of avoiding that which is to be discarded and embracing that which is to be adopted. In other words, it is mainly in reliance on correct understanding that we are able to accomplish both worldly goals (*e.g.*, a good job) and spiritual goals (*e.g.*, high rebirths and definite good), and avoid whatever may be in the way of achieving those goals. Having an incorrect understanding, on the other hand, is one of the main obstacles preventing us from accomplishing our aims.

A newly non-deceptive awareness is a consciousness that mainly achieves (b) direct results through valid cognition, because a valid cognizer may directly or “uninterruptedly” induce a series of other valid cognizers that enable a person to get a fuller understanding of an object. A valid cognizer may induce a series of other valid cognizers since any object possesses different aspects or characteristics (*e.g.*, its impermanence, its effect on other phenomena) which, following upon a general comprehension of the object, may lead to the successive realization of those various characteristics.

On the other hand, if one misperceives an object, such a misperception is likely to give rise to further misperceptions. Hence, if instead of a valid cognizer, one generates a wrong consciousness, such a wrong consciousness may induce a series of other wrong consciousnesses.

¹⁰ Please see, Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins’s *Cutting Through Appearances* (which contains an annotated translation of Koenchog Jigme Wangpo’s *Precious Garland of Tenets*), p. 199.

Also, Jeffrey Hopkins’ *Maps of the Profound: Jam-yang-shay-ba’s Great Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views of the Nature of Reality* (a translation of root text with commentaries) [Snow Lion: New York, 2003], p. 237:

“Jam-yang-shay-ba’s *Great Exposition of Tenets*: They assert that sense consciousnesses actually apprehend objects nakedly without [the object casting a representation or] aspect [of itself to the consciousness]. Sense consciousnesses are specified in order to eliminate the likes of conceptual consciousnesses [which operate through the medium of an image]. “Without the aspect” and “actually” are specified in consideration that they do not assert, as the Proponents of Sutra do, that a representation intervenes. Even minute particles are actually known.”

Here, the word “uninterruptedly” means that a valid cognizer may induce a series of valid cognizers without the inducing valid cognizer and the series of valid cognizers (that are induced) being “interrupted” by an awareness that is unrelated to the realization of that valid cognizer. In other words, the series of different valid cognizers arises uninterruptedly soon after the inducing valid cognizer.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who, like the proponents of the Vaibhashika School, asserts that whatever is a valid cognizer is not necessarily an awareness, for there are sense powers that are valid cognizers.

Our own system’s response is that only an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of its object) is that very *pramana* because it is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana*. (“... an awareness is that very *pramana*”).

An awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of its object) mainly achieves (a) indirect results through *pramana*, because it is the main cause of a person’s engaging in adopting and discarding the things that are to be adopted and discarded. (“*Because it is the main [cause] regarding the engaging in / Things that are to be adopted and discarded, ...*”).

Also, an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of its object) mainly achieves (b) direct results through *pramana*, because if there is that valid cognition, there is an ability to directly or uninterruptedly induce other *pramana*. This is because the different aspects or characteristics of an object (which are taken on by awarenesses that can newly realize their objects) enable one to posit different realizations — by those awarenesses — of the object’s different aspects. (“*Because if there is that, there is this, / Since on account of an object having different aspects, / There are different realizations by the awarenesses.*”)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the assertion of the opponent (of this outline)?
2. What is our own system’s response to the opponent’s assertion?
3. Which two assertions unique to the Vaibhashika (Great Exposition School) are refuted here?
4. What does it mean for an awareness “to take on the aspect of its object”?
5. What is the reason cited by our own system, why only an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of the object) is a valid cognizer?
6. Why is a valid cognizer a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect results through *pramana*?
7. Why is a valid cognizer a consciousness that mainly achieves (b) direct results through *pramana*?
8. What is the meaning of the word “uninterruptedly” here?

ASCERTAINING THAT THE INSTANCES [SATISFY] THE DEFINITION

[Someone:] The definition of *pramana* — being newly non-deceptive — is ascertained either by (a) [each *pramana*, i.e., valid cognizer] itself or (b) in dependence on another, subsequent [*pramana*]. In the first case (a), it follows that there will be no one who is confused about the distinction between *pramana* and non-*pramana*. In the second case (b), it follows that the ascertaining *pramana* will also require ascertainment as [being] non-deceptive by another, subsequent [*pramana*], and since that [*pramana*] will depend on yet another, there will be an infinite regress.

In the context of examining how one can come to know that a valid cognizer (arising in one's mental continuum) satisfies the definition of valid cognizer, and thus in the context of examining which awareness realizes that a valid cognizer is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' the opponent above sees only two possibilities: either (a) every valid cognizer itself ascertains or realizes that it is newly non-deceptive or (b) one requires a later valid cognizer to realize this. In other words, either (a) the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, for instance, (besides realizing blue) realizes that it is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive', or (b) one requires another valid cognizer arising after the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue to realize that the first moment of the eye consciousness was newly non-deceptive.

According to the opponent, if (a) every valid cognizer (besides realizing its main object) were to realize that it itself is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive', it would absurdly follow that there was no one who was unclear about whether his awareness was a valid cognizer or not. Therefore, one would not have to listen, contemplate and meditate on the scriptures in order to comprehend valid cognizers.

If (b) one were to require a subsequent valid cognizer to realize that the former valid cognizer was newly non-deceptive, it would absurdly follow that the subsequent valid cognizer also required the realization that it was newly non-deceptive by another subsequent valid cognizer, and since that later valid cognizer would depend on yet another valid cognizer, there would be infinite regress.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Realizing its own nature by itself, (4)

[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention.

[Response by Dharmottara:] It is not the case that all *pramana* (i.e., valid cognizers) are necessarily either [exclusively] ascertained by themselves or [exclusively ascertained] by another [subsequent *pramana*], because there is *pramana* that is ascertained **by itself**, and [*pramana*] that is ascertained by another [subsequent *pramana*]. This is so, because one observes that [some] self-experiencing self-knowing direct perceiver *pramana* (i.e., self-knowing valid cognizers) when **realizing their own nature** induce ascertainment of the factor of non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with themselves; and because one observes that some *pramana* when realizing their object of comprehension require ascertainment as non-deceptive ***pramana through pramana*** of **verbal convention** that arises later.

Here Gyaltsab Je cites three different interpretations as to the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*: "*Realizing its own nature by itself* / *[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*". These two lines are the response to the opponent's assertion.

The three interpretations are by three different Indian masters of *Pramana*: (a) Dharmottara, (b) Prajnakaragupta, and (c) Devendrabodhi. According to those masters, the two lines present two types of valid cognizer: (1) *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* and (2) *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* — with the first line describing *self-*

ascertainment valid cognizers and the second line *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*. However, the three masters differ with regard to how they describe the two types of valid cognizer.

The first interpretation of the two lines is by Dharmottara (*slob dpon chos mchog*).

Dharmottara interprets Dharmakirti's response as follows: Not all valid cognizers are realized to be 'knowers that are newly non-deceptive' either exclusively by themselves or exclusively by another subsequent valid cognizer. This is because there are *some* valid cognizers that are realized to be 'newly non-deceptive' by themselves and *some* that are realized by other subsequent valid cognizers. (Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*: "It is not the case that all *pramana* are necessarily either [exclusively] ascertained by themselves or [exclusively ascertained] by another [subsequent *pramana*], because there is *pramana* that is ascertained **by itself**, and [*pramana*] that is ascertained by another [subsequent *pramana*].")

An example of a valid cognizer that is realized to be a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive' by itself is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue. Yet this does not literally mean that the eye consciousness itself (besides realizing blue) realizes that it is a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive'. Instead, its self-knower — the self-knower perceiving the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue (which is of one nature with the eye consciousness) — realizes this.

The self-knower perceiving the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains (*i.e.*, realizes) the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue. Not only does it ascertain the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, it also ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a valid cognizer. Since the self-knower ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a valid cognizer, it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive'; and since the self-knower ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive', the self-knower ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension*, blue. A consciousness' *final object of comprehension* (or literally: "the final entity of an object of comprehension", *gzhal bya'i bdag nyid mthar thug pa*) is explained below.

As mentioned before, a self-knower is a mental consciousness that directly perceives an awareness that is of one substantial entity or one nature with itself. This is because every awareness consists of two parts: one part that is *directed outwards* (*e.g.*, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue) and apprehends phenomena such as shapes, colors, sounds, etc., while the other part is *directed inwards* (*e.g.*, the self-knower perceiving the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue) and perceives the awareness that is *directed outwards*.

Therefore, when Dharmottara says that some valid cognizers are ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' *by themselves* ("there is *pramana* that is ascertained **by itself**"), he does not literally mean that those valid cognizers (besides realizing their main object) also realize that they are 'newly non-deceptive'. Instead he means that those valid cognizers are ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to their *final object of comprehension* by their self-knowers.

In other words, since the self-knowers of some valid cognizers ascertain that those valid cognizers are 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to the valid cognizers' *final objects of comprehension*, Dharmottara says that those valid cognizers are ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' *by themselves*. Here the phrase "ascertained by themselves" means *ascertained by their self-knowers, which are of one nature with themselves*.

Taking the example of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' by itself, because it is ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to the eye consciousness's *final object of comprehension* (blue) by its self-knowing valid cognizer

realizing the self-knower's own nature, *i.e.*, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue. In other words, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' by itself, because it is ascertained by its self-knowing valid cognizer which besides ascertaining the self-knower's own nature, *i.e.*, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, also ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to the eye consciousness's *final object of comprehension*, blue. (Please note that if an awareness is a valid cognizer, its self-knower is necessarily also a valid cognizer — a 'self-knowing valid cognizer').

Thus, the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue; it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer; it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive'; and it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is newly non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousnesses' *final object of comprehension*, blue.

However, not every valid cognizer is ascertained to be newly non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* by its self-knower, because not every valid cognizer is newly non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*. Not every valid cognizer is newly non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* because not every valid cognizer realizes its *final object of comprehension*.

This is because, as mentioned above, there are two types of valid cognizer:

- (1) Self-ascertainment valid cognizer (according to Dharmottara's interpretation, also called 'valid cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself', *rang las nges kyi tshad ma*);
- (2) Other-ascertainment valid cognizer (according to Dharmottara's interpretation, also called 'valid cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another', *gzhan las nges kyi tshad ma*).

An example of an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar, with the red color being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not.

Another example is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a tree from afar, with the tree being a juniper tree and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that tree is a juniper tree or not.

The first example, the eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red from afar, is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* because, even though it is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' with regard to the color red, it is not non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*, the color of fire, and thus with regard to 'the color red *being* the color of fire'. (Please note that 'the color red being the color of fire' is also that eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension*.)

The eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the color red because it realizes the color red. However, it is not non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* because it does not realize the color of fire nor that 'the color red *is* the color of fire'. It does not realize the color of fire nor that 'the color red *is* the color of fire' because the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness arises is far away from the fire and thus has doubts whether the color red is the color of fire or not.

The color of fire as well as 'the color red *being* the color of fire' are the *final objects of comprehension* of that eye consciousness because the eye consciousness *has the ability* to realize that the color red is the color of fire and because here the color red (perceived by the eye consciousness) and the color of fire (appearing to the eye consciousness) are equivalent, and equally easily realized. The only reason the eye consciousness does not

realize the color of fire, and thus that ‘the color red *is* the color of fire’, is that the fire is far away from the observer, resulting in the (observer’s) uncertainty as to whether the color red is the color of fire or not.

The first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the color red from afar (with the color red being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* because — simply put — it is unable to induce ascertainment of the color of fire through its own power, and therefore of the fact that here, the color red is the color of fire. This means that the eye consciousness is unable to induce, through its own power, a subsequent conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and that the color red is the color of fire.

Instead, it requires another valid cognizer of *verbal convention* which arises later and is able to induce, through its own power, a subsequent conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and that the color red is the color of fire. An example of such a valid cognizer of verbal convention is the first moment of an eye consciousness (in the continuum of a person who has moved closer to the fire) realizing the color of fire and thus that the color red here is the color of fire. Since such an eye consciousness realizes its *final object of comprehension* (and is, therefore, a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*), it is able to induce, through its own power, a subsequent conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and thus that the color red here is the color of fire.

The later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire is called “a valid cognizer of verbal convention” because it induces a conceptual consciousness that is able to link the color red (appearing to the eye consciousness) with the verbal convention of the color of fire, *i.e.*, it is able to link the red color (appearing to the eye consciousness) with the term “color of fire”.

In other words, the later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire induces a conceptual consciousness which — besides ascertaining the color of fire, and that the color red (appearing to the eye consciousness) is the color of fire — is also able to label that red color with the term “color of fire”.

Please note that *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are necessarily sense consciousnesses. There are no *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* that are mental consciousnesses. Hence, self-knowing valid cognizers, inferential valid cognizers, yogic direct perceiving valid cognizers, etc., are all *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*.

Examples of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent, the first moment of a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness, and so forth.

The first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color of fire is a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* because — simply put — it itself is able to induce, through its own power, ascertainment of its *final object of comprehension*, the color of fire, and thus of the fact that the red color is the color of fire. This means that it is able to induce, through its own power, a conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and that the red color is the color of fire.

Likewise, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent, and the first moment of a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they are able to induce, through their own power, ascertainment of their *final objects of comprehension* without relying on another valid cognizer to induce such an ascertainment.

Returning to Dharmottara’s interpretation of the *Pramanavarttika*’s two lines, “*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal*

convention”: even though according to Dharmottara, the two lines expound on the two types of valid cognizer, Dharmottara holds that the two lines explain the two types of valid cognizers by way of describing the self-knowers of those valid cognizers.

The words of Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* expressing Dharmottara’s interpretation of the first line (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”) which presents *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are: “[some] self-experiencing self-knowing direct perceiver *pramana* (i.e., self-knowing valid cognizers) when **realizing their own nature** induce an ascertainment of the factor of non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with themselves”.

The meaning of these words is that some self-knowing valid cognizers, i.e., the self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*, realize their own nature because they realize the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* that are simultaneous and of one nature with those self-knowers (“[Some] self-experiencing self-knowing direct perceiver *pramana* (i.e., self-knowing valid cognizers) when **realizing their own nature**”).

Not only do those self-knowers realize the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers), they also realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers. Since the self-knowers realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*, they realize that the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*.

For instance, the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color of fire ascertains not only the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, it also ascertains the factor of non-deceptiveness of that eye consciousness. Since the self-knower ascertains the factor of non-deceptiveness of the eye consciousness, it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ *final object of comprehension*, the color of fire (and that the color of the fire is the color of fire).

On the other hand, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* do not ascertain that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers’ final objects of comprehension*.

The words of Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* expressing Dharmottara’s interpretation of the second line (“[*Realizing*] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) which presents *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are: “some *pramana* realizing their object of comprehension require ascertainment as non-deceptive **pramana through** a *pramana* of **verbal convention** that arises later”.

The meaning of these words is that some valid cognizers, i.e., the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, realize their objects of comprehension (“some *pramana* realizing their object of comprehension”) but do not realize that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers’ final objects of comprehension*.

The self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize their objects of comprehension because they realize the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) and that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers’ objects of comprehension*.

Furthermore, both the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers) and the fact that 'those self-knowers are non-deceptive with regard to their objects of comprehension' are the *final objects of comprehension* of those self-knowers, which is why the self-knowers are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*.

However, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* do not realize that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers'* *final objects of comprehension*. The self-knowers do not realize this because the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are not non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*. The *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers) are not non-deceptive with regard to their final objects of comprehension because they do not realize their *final objects of comprehension*.

As mentioned above, an example of an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar, with the red color here being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not. The self-knower of that eye consciousness realizes its object of comprehension because it realizes the eye consciousness (that is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) as well as the fact that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' object of comprehension, the color red.

However, the self-knower of that eye consciousness does not realize that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* (the color of fire and the fact that the color red here is the color of fire). The self-knower does not realize such because the eye consciousness is not non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*. It is not non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension because it is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer*.

Hence, the person in whose continuum the self-knower of an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* arises does not know that the color he perceives is actually the color of fire. Therefore, he requires a further self-knowing valid cognizer to ascertain that he perceives the color of fire.

This means that the person who has in his continuum, for instance, a self-knower perceiving the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color red from afar (with the red color here being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) requires a later self-knower valid cognizer in order to be able to ascertain that what he is looking at is actually the color of fire. That self-knower valid cognizer is the self-knower of a later eye consciousness newly realizing the color of fire (and arising after the person has moved closer to the fire), and thus it ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension* (i.e., the color of fire and that the color red here is the color of fire).

Furthermore, the later self-knower valid cognizer ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire (that is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' final object of comprehension *in dependence on a valid cognizer of verbal convention*. The later self-knower valid cognizer ascertains that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension *in dependence on a valid cognizer of verbal convention* because the later self-knowing valid cognizer ascertains that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension in dependence on the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire and because, as mentioned above, that eye consciousness is a valid cognizer of verbal convention.

Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation* that, “some *pramana* require ascertainment as non-deceptive ***pramana through a pramana of verbal convention*** that arises later”.

Here, the phrase “through a *pramana* of verbal convention” means *in dependence on* a valid cognizer of verbal convention. Thus, in short, some *pramana*, *i.e.*, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, require self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that arise later and are able to provide further ascertainment) since the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are unable to ascertain that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to those valid cognizers’ *final objects of comprehension*.

For instance, the self-knower of an *other-ascertainment* eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red from afar requires another self-knower (that arises later and is able to provide further ascertainment), because the self-knower of the *other-ascertainment* eye consciousness does not ascertain that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ *final object of comprehension*.

Hence, the self-knower of the *other-ascertainment* eye consciousness realizing the color red from afar requires the self-knower of a later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, because it is only the self-knower of the later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire that is able to ascertain that the later eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ *final object of comprehension*.

Since the self-knower of the later eye consciousness ascertains this non-deceptiveness *in dependence on* the later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, which (as explained above) is a valid cognizer of verbal convention, the ascertainment of the eye consciousness being non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ final object of comprehension takes place *in dependence on* or *through* a valid cognizer of verbal convention.

This completes the interpretation by Dharmottara.

[Response by Prajnakaragupta:] Alternatively, from the perspective of a knowing consciousness that investigates the ultimate, there is no distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana* because from the perspective [of that knowing consciousness] one **realizes** that there is only the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities, the non-dual experience experiencing **its own nature by itself**. [Yet even] if from the perspective of that [knowing consciousness investigating the ultimate] there is no [distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana*], this does not mean it would be unacceptable for there to be such a distinction, because a *pramana* of **verbal convention** that functions without investigating [the ultimate] establishes a distinction between ***pramana*** and *non-pramana*.

[Some] assert that the first passage (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”) indicates that a self-knower establishes the factor of experiencing its own nature (*i.e.*, it establishes the awareness that is of one nature with the self-knower), and that the latter passage (“[*Realizing*] the very *pramana through verbal convention*”) indicates that a subsequent *pramana* — having the appearance of the functions [of its object] — establishes [that the former awareness was] *pramana* with regard to its object of comprehension. [However] these are not the complete definitions of self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment.

The second interpretation of the meaning of the two lines of the *Pramanavarttika* (“*Realizing its own nature by itself* / [*Realizing*] the very *pramana through verbal convention*”) is by the Indian master Prajnakaragupta (*rgyan mkhan po*).

According to Prajnakaragupta, *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*, as described in the first line (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”), are valid cognizers directly realizing ultimate truths, *i.e.*, emptiness.

Please note that although the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is generally taught from the point of view of the Buddhist philosophical system of the Sautrantika (Sutra School), Prajnakaragupta's explanation is from the point of view of the Chittamatra (Mind-Only School).

Proponents of the Chittamatra School assert that phenomena do not exist externally; they are of one nature or one substantial entity with the mind and appear to it owing to the activation of mental imprints. Therefore, the physical world and its shapes, colours, sounds, and so forth, merely *appear* to an awareness without existing in the manner of external phenomena.

This does not mean that physical phenomena *are* mind, because minds are observers of objects, and if physical phenomena were minds, stones and so forth would absurdly have objects of perception. Rather, just as a dream object is not the dream consciousness that perceives it, nor is it of a different nature or different substantial entity than the dream consciousness, similarly, the physical objects of the world are not the sense consciousnesses that perceive them, nor are they of a different nature than those sense consciousnesses.

The reason why sights, sounds, smells, etc., appear to the mind is that an imprint, previously left on the mental continuum of the person, has been activated and simultaneously produces both the appearance of an object and a cognizing mind — much as in a dream. The cognizing mind in turn leaves a *new* imprint, which will be responsible for the appearance of another object and the manifestation of another cognizing mind at some time in the future.

Hence, the reason why we perceive shapes, colours, and so forth, is not because objects exist outside the mind, but because we have left – and continue to leave – countless imprints on our mind-stream: once activated, they are responsible for our different experiences. Only Buddhas have no imprints anymore; they perceive objects the way they are because they have overcome all obstructions and shortcomings of the mind.

The fact that the subject (the mind) and its object are produced simultaneously by one imprint accounts for their being of one substantial entity.

Therefore, according to the Chittamatra School, ultimate truth or emptiness refers to *the lack* of subject and object being different substantial entities (*i.e.*, it refers to subject and object *not* being different substantial entities). In other words, ultimate truth or emptiness refers to the lack of a mind (subject) and its object being different substantial entities. For instance, the lack of an eye consciousness and a table (that is perceived by that eye consciousness) being different substantial entities is an ultimate truth, *i.e.*, emptiness.

A valid cognizer directly realizing ultimate truth, or emptiness, refers to a meditative equipoise that is the product of intensive and prolonged meditation, and which directly realizes the ultimate truth or emptiness of *all* phenomena. It is a non-dual consciousness that is single-pointedly absorbed in ultimate truth, with nothing other than emptiness appearing to it.

Since such a valid cognizer directly realizes the ultimate truth of *all* phenomena, it also realizes its own ultimate nature, *i.e.*, its own ultimate truth. Furthermore, since it is a knowing consciousness that investigates only the ultimate (*i.e.*, it realizes only *the lack* of subject and object being different substantial entities), it is unable to determine whether an awareness is a valid cognizer or not.

This is why Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, “from the perspective of a knowing consciousness that investigates the ultimate, there is no distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana* because, from the perspective [of that knowing consciousness], one **realizes** that there is only the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities, the non-dual experience experiencing **its own nature by itself.**”

According to Prajnakaragupta, valid cognizers directly realizing ultimate truth are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they directly realize their own ultimate nature. As mentioned above, they realize their own ultimate nature because they directly realize the ultimate nature or ultimate truth of *all* phenomena. Hence, Prajnakaragupta asserts that *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are valid cognizers that realize their own ultimate nature.

However, since *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize only ultimate truths, they do not perceive any conventional truths; and since they do not perceive any conventional truths, they are not able to determine whether an awareness is a valid cognizer or not.

But this does not mean that there are no valid cognizers that are able to distinguish between an awareness that is a valid cognizer and an awareness that is not a valid cognizer. There are valid cognizers that can make such distinctions, because there are *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*.

According to Prajnakaragupta, *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* — described in the second line (“[Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) — refer to conventional valid cognizers. Conventional valid cognizers are awarenesses that are newly non-deceptive with regard to phenomena that are conventional truths, *i.e.*, they newly realize phenomena that are conventional truths. According to the Chittamatra School, conventional truths refer to all phenomena that are not emptiness, such as vase, pillar, consciousness, and so forth.

Examples of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are sense direct perceiver valid cognizers, such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a chair, an inferential valid cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass, a yogic direct perceiver valid cognizer realizing impermanence, and so forth. They are *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they realize or ascertain phenomena other than emptiness.

In Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, the words that express Prajnakaragupta’s interpretation of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are, “[Yet even] if from the perspective of that [knowing consciousness investigating the ultimate] there is no [distinction between *pramana* and non-*pramana*], this does not mean it would be unacceptable for there to be such a distinction, because a *pramana* of **verbal convention** that functions without investigating [the ultimate] establishes a distinction between ***pramana*** and non-*pramana*.

In other words, even though a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* directly realizing emptiness is unable to distinguish between an awareness that is a valid cognizer and an awareness that is not a valid cognizer, this does not mean that such a distinction does not exist. Such a distinction exists because a conventional valid cognizer (*i.e.*, an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* or valid cognizer of verbal convention) is able to distinguish between the two.

Having presented Prajnakaragupta’s interpretation of the meaning of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* and *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, Gyaltsab Je then cites Prajnakaragupta’s refutation of the interpretation of the two types of valid cognizers (and thus of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*) given by some other scholars:

According to these scholars, *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* — described in the first line (“Realizing its own nature by itself”) — refer to the self-knowers of valid cognizers. These self-knowers are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they ascertain that the valid cognizers (which are of one nature with the self-knowers) are awarenesses that apprehend their objects. For instance, the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains that the eye consciousness is an awareness apprehending blue.

Other-ascertainment valid cognizers — described in the second line (“[Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) — refer to valid cognizers that arise after the earlier self-knowers of valid cognizers and realize that the awarenesses (previously realized by the self-knowers) were *valid cognizers* with regard to their objects of comprehension. In the case of the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, subsequent to that self-knower arises another valid cognizer which ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing blue was a valid cognizer with regard to its object of comprehension, blue. This means that unlike the self-knower, the subsequent valid cognizer does not merely ascertain that the eye consciousness was an awareness perceiving blue, it ascertains that the eye consciousness was a *valid cognizer realizing blue*. According to these scholars, that subsequent valid cognizer is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer*.

However, Prajnakaragupta holds that this explanation is not correct, for it does not correctly define the two types of valid cognizers.

The words of Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* expressing Prajnakaragupta’s refutation are, “[Some] assert that the first passage (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”) indicates that a self-knower establishes the factor of experiencing its own nature (*i.e.*, it establishes the awareness that is of one nature with the self-knower), and that the latter passage (“[Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) indicates that a subsequent *pramana* — having the appearance of the functions [of its object] — establishes [that the former awareness was] *pramana* with regard to its object of comprehension. [However] these are not the complete definitions of self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment.”

This completes the interpretation by Prajnakaragupta.

Alternatively, one can apply the explanation by Acharya Devendrabodhi: Even though the mere existence of an awareness such as a direct perceiver apprehending blue is **realized by** its **self**-knowing direct perceiver, it follows that there is no certainty as to [that self-knowing direct perceiver] realizing the factor of being *pramana* that is simultaneous with and of one substantial entity with [the self-knowing direct perceiver], because [in some cases] one observes that the **pramana** factor must be realized by a later *pramana* of **verbal convention** — having the appearance of the functions [of its object].

The third interpretation of the meaning of the two lines of the *Pramanavarttika* (“*Realizing its own nature by itself* / [Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) is by the Indian master Devendrabodhi (*lha dbang blo*).

According to Devendrabodhi, the self-knower of a valid cognizer ascertains that the valid cognizer (that is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is an awareness apprehending its object. However, it is not certain whether the self-knower also ascertains that the valid cognizer is ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

For instance, the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains an eye consciousness apprehending blue. But the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness does not necessarily ascertain that the eye consciousness is a valid cognizer and thus ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

A self-knower is unable to ascertain this when the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness and its self-knower arise holds the wrong view that there are no valid cognizers that are newly non-deceptive with regard to their object. Holding such a wrong view hinders the self-knower from fully ascertaining its object, *i.e.*, it prevents the self-knower from realizing that the eye consciousness is in fact a valid cognizer.

According to Devendrabodhi, a self-knower that is able to ascertain that the valid cognizer (which is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is ‘a knower that is newly

non-deceptive' is a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* — described in the first line (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”). Therefore, the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, which ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness is ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, is asserted to be a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*.

If a self-knower is unable to ascertain that the valid cognizer (which is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a subsequent valid cognizer is needed to ascertain this. Such a subsequent valid cognizer of verbal convention (ascertaining that the valid cognizer previously apprehended by the self-knower was ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’) is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* — described in the second line (“[*Realizing*] *the very pramana through verbal convention*”).

This completes the interpretation by Devendrabodhi.

Next follows an extensive examination of the two types of valid cognizers by an opponent:

[Someone:] What are “self-ascertainment” and “other-ascertainment” [valid cognizers]? Of the two, (a) object and (b) consciousness, [self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers]: Either [they] refer to [valid cognizers] inducing or not inducing ascertainment of (a) *an object* through their own power. Or [they refer to valid cognizers] inducing or not inducing ascertainment] of (b) *an object-possessor* (i.e., a consciousness) [through their own power].

Here the opponent examines what self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers refer to. According to him, the two types of valid cognizers pertain either to the ascertainment of (a) *an object* (i.e., an object other than a consciousness), or the ascertainment of (b) *a consciousness* — with consciousness here mainly referring to a *valid cognizer*.

If self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that induces ascertainment of *an object* through its own power, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that does not induce ascertainment of *an object* through its own power.

Alternatively, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (b) *a consciousness* (i.e., a valid cognizer), a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that induces ascertainment of a *valid cognizer* through its own power, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that does not induce ascertainment of a *valid cognizer* through its own power.

Please note that an awareness that realizes something also induces ascertainment of that thing through its own power. Such an awareness induces ascertainment of the thing through its own power since it is able to induce a subsequent conceptual consciousness that ascertains or realizes the same thing. For instance, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table induces ascertainment of the table through its own power because, through its own power, it induces a subsequent conceptual consciousness that also realizes the table.

If it were the first (an object), it would follow that the later *pramana* ascertaining [its object] would be a subsequent cognizer. Also, if the earlier *pramana* were not able to induce ascertainment of any of its objects through its own power, it could only be a doubting consciousness. If that were the case, it would not be suitable to be *pramana* because it would not overcome the slightest qualm.

The opponent argues that if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*, “the later *pramana*” (i.e., a self-ascertainment valid cognizer) would be a subsequent cognizer. Furthermore, if “the

earlier *pramana*” (i.e., an other-ascertainment valid cognizer) were not able to induce ascertainment of any of its objects through its own power, it would absurdly be a doubting consciousness, because, like a doubting consciousness, it would be unable to overcome the slightest qualm. (Later and earlier *pramana* are explained below.)

The reasoning that leads the opponent to these conclusions is as follows: according to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be defined as ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be defined as ‘a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of its object through its own power’.

If a self-ascertainment valid cognizer were to be defined as ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’, it would follow that an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be a *self-ascertainment* valid cognizer. For instance, the first moment an eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar (with the red color being the color of fire and the valid cognizer arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) would be a self-ascertainment valid cognizer because it satisfies the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer. It satisfies the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer because it is ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’. The first moment of that eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red is ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’ because it is a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of the radiant color red through its own power.

The opponent then argues that if the first moment the eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar (with the red color being the color of fire and the valid cognizer arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) were a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, it would be able to induce ascertainment of its *final object of comprehension* through its own power. If the first moment of that eye consciousness were able to induce ascertainment of its final object of comprehension through its own power, it would realize its final object of comprehension, i.e., it would realize that the radiant color red is the color of fire.

If that eye consciousness were to realize that the color red is the color of fire, the later self-ascertainment valid cognizer realizing the color of fire would be a *subsequent cognizer*. The later self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be a subsequent cognizer, because the later self-ascertainment valid cognizer here refers to the first moment of an eye consciousness (in the continuum of the person who has moved closer to the fire) realizing the color of fire and thus that the color red here is the color of fire.

In other words, if the earlier other-ascertainment valid cognizer realizing the radiant color red from afar were able to realize that the red color is the color of fire, the later self-ascertainment valid cognizer realizing the color of fire would be a subsequent cognizer, because that later self-ascertainment valid cognizer has been induced by the earlier other-ascertainment valid cognizer and because the later cognizer realized what had already been realized, i.e., that the color red here is the color of fire.

This is why Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, “it would follow that the later *pramana* ascertaining [its object] would be a subsequent cognizer”.

The opponent then argues that since the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red (with the red color being the color of fire and the valid cognizer arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) is not a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, but an other-ascertainment valid cognizer, it cannot possibly satisfy the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer.

If the eye consciousness were not to satisfy the opponent's definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, it would not induce ascertainment of its object through its own power. If the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red from afar were not able to induce ascertainment of its object through its own power, it would not *realize* any of its objects. If it were not to realize any of its objects, it could only be a doubting consciousness, for, like a doubting consciousness, it would be unable to overcome any qualms or wrong views with regard to its object. If that eye consciousness were a doubting consciousness, it would not be a valid cognizer, and thus not an other-ascertainment valid cognizer.

Therefore, Gyalsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, "Also, if the former *pramana* were not able to induce ascertainment of any of its objects through its own power, it would only be a doubting consciousness. If that were the case, it would not be suitable to be *pramana* because it could not overcome the slightest qualm.

This completes the section on the opponent examining self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers pertaining to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*.

Object-possessors are ascertained to be threefold: (1) definition, (2) definiendum, and (3) instance.

The opponent then examines whether the two types of valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *a consciousness, i.e., a valid cognizer*. The way the opponent examines whether self-ascertainment and other ascertainment valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of a valid cognizer — an object-possessor — is by investigating that object-possessing valid cognizer from the perspective of the following three aspects: (1) definition, (2) definiendum, and (3) instance.

Here *definition* refers to the definition of a valid cognizer, *definiendum* to the definiendum of 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive', and *instance* to an instance of a valid cognizer.

The opponent first examines (3) an instance of a valid cognizer:

It is not plausible to distinguish [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] being able or not being able to ascertain through their own power (3) an instance of *pramana*, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue. This is because it is impossible for a consciousness directed outwards, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue, to realize itself. Also, [an awareness] is not suitable to be *pramana* if it is not realized by a self-knowing direct perceiver through [that self-knowing direct perceiver's] own power, which experiences [the *pramana*] just because [the *pramana*] is there.

According to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *a consciousness* — and in this case, to the ascertainment of an instance of a valid cognizer, such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, then a self-ascertainment valid cognizer (taking the example of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) would refer to 'a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue', and an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue'.

Furthermore, the opponent holds that those self-ascertainment or other-ascertainment valid cognizers (that induce or do not induce ascertainment through their own power of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) could refer to only two kinds of valid cognizer: they would refer either to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue or to the self-knower of such an eye consciousness.

If the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that induces ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue', while the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue'.

In other words, if the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that realizes itself, and the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not realize itself.

However, the opponent argues that an eye consciousness realizing blue that also realizes itself is not plausible, since an eye consciousness is an awareness that is directed outwards (*i.e.*, perceives objects of the external world) and thus could not realize itself.

This is expressed in Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* with the words, "It is not plausible to distinguish [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] being able or not being able to ascertain through their own power (3) an instance of *pramana*, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue. This is because it is impossible for a consciousness directed outwards, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue, to realize itself.

On the other hand, if the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that induces ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue', while the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue'.

In other words, if the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that ascertains the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue', while the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not ascertain the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue'.

However, the opponent disputes the existence of a self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not ascertain or realize that eye consciousness realizing blue, for he argues that by reason of the fact that the first moment of that eye consciousness is a valid cognizer, it must have a self-knower that realizes the eye consciousness. Otherwise, the opponent argues, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue would not qualify as a valid cognizer.

This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je says when he says, "Also, [an awareness] is not suitable to be *pramana* if it is not realized by a self-knowing direct perceiver through [that self-knowing direct perceiver's] own power, which experiences [the *pramana*] just because [the *pramana*] is there."

Then, the opponent examines whether self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' (with *the definiendum* of 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' referring to *pramana* or *valid cognizer* itself):

Furthermore, it is not reasonable to differentiate [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] ascertaining or not ascertaining through their own power (2) the definiendum — the verbal convention of *pramana* — based on an instance. This is because it would follow that inferential [valid] cognizers in the continuum of children who do not know the verbal convention of *pramana*, or in the continuum Charvakas would not be self-ascertainment [valid cognizers].

According to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment through its own power of the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

In other words, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that realizes the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not realize the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

This would mean that a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would realize the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ *based on an instance of a valid cognizer*, such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue. To realize the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ based on the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue means to realize that the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a valid cognizer.

Please note that a person who is able to realize that an instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer must know the verbal convention of a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, he must know the term “valid cognizer”.

Therefore, according to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to an awareness that realizes that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to an awareness that does not realize that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer.

However, the opponent holds that this is not reasonable, which is expressed as follows in Gyaltsab Je’s ***Elucidation of the Path to Liberation***: “Furthermore, it is not reasonable to differentiate [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] ascertaining or not ascertaining through their own power (2) the definiendum — the verbal convention of *pramana* — based on an instance”.

The reason given by the opponent for holding that this is not reasonable is as follows: if a self-ascertainment valid cognizer were to refer to an awareness that realizes that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer, inferential valid cognizers in the continuum of children who do not know the term “valid cognizer” or in the continuum of followers of the Charvaka School who not accept the existence of inferential cognizers would not be self-ascertainment valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, from a Buddhist point of view, all inferential valid cognizers are self-ascertainment valid cognizers.

Furthermore, inferential valid cognizers arise in the mental continuum of children who do not know the term “valid cognizer” as well as in the continuum of followers of the non-Buddhist Charvaka School who do not assert the existence of inferential cognizers.

However, neither those children nor the followers of the Charvaka School are able to ascertain that the inferential valid cognizers in their continuum *are* valid cognizers.

Children who do not know the term “valid cognizer” are unable to realize that their inferential cognizers *are* valid cognizers, because, as mentioned above, one needs to know the term “valid cognizer” in order to realize this.

Followers of the Charvaka School are unable to realize that their inferential cognizers *are* valid cognizers, because they do not accept the existence of inferential valid cognizers.

Therefore, if a self-ascertainment valid cognizer were to refer to an awareness that realizes that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer, the inferential valid cognizers of those children and the followers of the Charvaka School would have to realize that they themselves (*i.e.*, the inferential valid cognizers) *are* valid cognizers. However, since those inferential cognizers are unable to realize this, they would not qualify as self-ascertainment valid cognizers.

This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je in his ***Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*** when he says, “This is because it would follow that inferential [valid] cognizers in the continuum of children who do not know the verbal convention of *pramana*, or in the continuum of Charvakas, would not be self-ascertainment [valid cognizers].”

Lastly, the opponent examines whether self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of (1) the definition of a valid cognizer:

Also, if one were to differentiate [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] ascertaining or not ascertaining through one’s own power the (1) definition [of *pramana*] — being non-deceptive — it would follow that inferential [valid] cognizers in the continuum of Charvakas would not be self-ascertainment [valid cognizers] because Charvakas assert that inferential cognizers are deceptive.

According to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (1) *the definition* of a valid cognizer, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment through its own power of the definition of a valid cognizer, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of the definition of a valid cognizer through its own power.

This means that, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (1) *the definition* of a valid cognizer, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that realizes ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not realize ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

However, the opponent argues that this is not acceptable, because it would follow that inferential valid cognizers in the mental continuum of followers of the Charvaka School would not be self-ascertainment valid cognizers. The inferential valid cognizers of followers of the Charvaka School would not be self-ascertainment valid cognizers because if they were self-ascertainment valid cognizer they would have to realize that they themselves (*i.e.*, the inferential valid cognizers) *are* ‘knowers that are newly non-deceptive’. Yet, the inferential valid cognizers in the continuum of followers of the Charvaka School do not realize that they themselves are ‘knowers that are non-deceptive’ because Charvakas assert that inferential awarenesses are deceptive.

This completes the examination of the two types of valid cognizers by an opponent.

[Response:] There is no fault, because when one examines *pramana* that ascertains that the instances of *pramana* [satisfy] the definition [of *pramana*], [one sees that] it is impossible for

pramana not to induce ascertainment of [at least] some parts of its objects of comprehension through its own power.

Therefore, if the factor of non-deceptiveness is ascertained through the power of [the self-knower of a *pramana*, that *pramana*] is a self-ascertainment [valid cognizer]; if it is ascertained through the power of another [self-knower of a later *pramana* the earlier *pramana* is] an other-ascertainment [valid cognizer].

Our own system's response is that there is no fault, since the opponent's arguments do not harm our assertions with regard to the two types of valid cognizers. They do not harm our assertions because when one examines valid cognizers that realize that a particular valid cognizer is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' (as is done in this outline), one comes to see that all valid cognizers are able to induce ascertainment of at least some of their objects of comprehension through their own power.

However, this does not mean that all valid cognizers are able to induce ascertainment of their *final objects of comprehension* through their own power, for there are two types of valid cognizers, (1) self-ascertainment valid cognizers and (2) other-ascertainment valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that realizes its final object of comprehension and thus induces ascertainment of its final object of comprehension through its own power. An other-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that does not realize its final object of comprehension and hence does not induce ascertainment of its final object of comprehension through its own power but requires ascertainment by another valid cognizer.

Therefore, as explained by Dharmottara, the self-knower of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer ascertains the valid cognizer's factor of non-deceptiveness with regard to the final object of comprehension of the valid cognizer, while the self-knower of an other-ascertainment valid cognizer does not ascertain the valid cognizer's factor of non-deceptiveness with regard to the final object of comprehension of the valid cognizer. Instead, the self-knower of an other-ascertainment valid cognizer requires another self-knower of a later valid cognizer that ascertains the factor of non-deceptiveness with regard to the final object of comprehension of the later valid cognizer.

This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je when he says, "Therefore, if the factor of non-deceptiveness is ascertained through the power of [the self-knower of a *pramana*, that *pramana*] is a self-ascertainment [valid cognizer]; if it is ascertained through the power of another [self-knower of a later *pramana*, the earlier *pramana* is] an other-ascertainment [valid cognizer]."

The latter passage indicates that among the different interpretations of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, ("*Realizing its own nature by itself* / [*Realizing*] *the very pramana through verbal convention*") given by the three masters of *pramana* (Dharmottara, Prajnakaragupta, and Devendrabodhi), our own system accords with the first interpretation given by Dharmottara.

[Someone:] Well, then, it follows that inferential [valid] cognizers are not necessarily self-ascertainment [valid cognizers].

Here an opponent does not understand the meaning of the above-cited words from Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation* that set forth an other-ascertainment valid cognizer, "if the factor of non-deceptiveness is ascertained through the power of [the self-knower of a *pramana*, that *pramana*] is a self-ascertainment [valid cognizer]."

The opponent thinks these words indicate that whatever is an inferential valid cognizer is not necessarily a self-ascertainment valid cognizer. According to the opponent, for instance, an inferential valid cognizer in the mental continuum of a follower of the Charvaka School realizing the presence of fire on a smoky mountain pass is not a self-

ascertainment valid cognizer, because the self-knower of that inferential valid cognizer does not ascertain the factor of non-deceptiveness of the inferential cognizer through its own power. The self-knower does not ascertain the factor of non-deceptiveness through its own power, because it does not realize it. The self-knower does not realize the factor of non-deceptiveness, because, as explained before, a Charvaka does not assert that an inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive.

[Response:] There is no fault: the sense of non-deceptiveness of a valid cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass — in dependence on the reason, ‘smoke’ — in the continuum of a Charvaka is well established, because the valid cognizer induces ascertainment through its own power so that [the Charvaka] is able to obtain the [final] object [of comprehension] just as realized.

Our response is that Gyaltsab Je’s words do not indicate that an inferential cognizer in the mental continuum of a Charvaka is an other-ascertainment valid cognizer just because that inferential cognizer’s self-knower is unable to ascertain the inferential cognizer’s non-deceptiveness.

According to our own system, a Charvaka’s inferential valid cognizer, such as an inferential cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass (which has arisen in dependence on the correct reason, ‘smoke’), is a self-ascertainment valid cognizer because it is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension, the fire on the smoky mountain pass.

The inferential cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension because it induces ascertainment of the fire on the mountain pass through its own power, enabling the Charvaka to obtain, *i.e.*, to seek out the fire.

[Someone:] If *pramana* and non-*pramana* are distinguished by *pramana* itself or a later arisen [*pramana*], it follows that composing shastras is pointless.

Here an opponent argues it is pointless to compose shastras (such as the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* by Dharmakirti) that present the difference between awarenesses that are valid cognizers and awarenesses that are not valid cognizers, because we already know this difference. We already know the difference because our valid cognizers are able to distinguish between awarenesses that are valid cognizers and those that are not.

The distinction between an awareness that is or is not a valid cognizer is made either in dependence on a valid cognizer’s self-knower (“by *pramana* itself”) or depending on a later valid cognizer (“a later arisen *pramana*”), such as an inferential valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Shastras counteract bewilderment,

[Response:] It is not pointless to compose **shastras**, because they are necessary to **counteract bewilderment** with respect to the methods for [attaining] liberation, such as [regarding] the Vedas to be *pramana*, and so forth — it is for that purpose that shastras are composed.

Alternatively, [this line] can be applied to the words of the Omniscient One.

Our own response is that it is not pointless to compose shastras because studying and contemplating them enable a person to overcome any confusion with respect to the methods for attaining liberation or Buddhahood; it enables a person to overcome, for instance, the misperception that the Vedas are *pramana*, etc.

Alternatively the line from the *Pramanavarttika*, “*Shastras counteract bewilderment,*” can be applied to the words of the Omniscient One. In other words, it is

not pointless to compose **shastras**, because they are necessary to **counteract bewilderment** with respect to the words of the Buddha, *i.e.*, the sutras. This means that the shastras elaborate on the sutras; studying and contemplating them enables a person to overcome any confusion and misunderstandings with regard to the words of the Buddha.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who wonders which awareness ascertains that a valid cognizer satisfies the definition of valid cognizer. According to the opponent, there are two possibilities: either a valid cognizer itself realizes that it is a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive' or another subsequent valid cognizer is required to realize that the earlier valid cognizer was 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'.

Our own system's response (based on Dharmottara's interpretation) is that there are *some* valid cognizers that they themselves realize they are 'knowers that are newly non-deceptive' ("*Realizing its own nature by itself*") and *others* that are realized by other subsequent valid cognizers. ("*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*")

This means that the self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize their own nature by themselves because they realize the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* that are simultaneous and of one nature with those self-knowers, and because they realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of those *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*. Since the self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of those valid cognizers, they also realize that the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*. ("*Realizing its own nature by itself*")

Regarding the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, although they realize the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) and the factor of non-deceptiveness of those *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, they do not realize that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers' final objects of comprehension*. The self-knowers do not realize this because the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are not non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*.

Therefore, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* require a later valid cognizer of verbal convention, *i.e.*, a later *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*, the self-knower of which realizes that the *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* is non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*. ("*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*")

Gyaltsab Je then cites an opponent who argues that, according to the above explanation from our own system, it is not necessary to compose shastras (treatises on the word of the Buddha) that set forth the difference between awarenesses that are valid cognizers and awarenesses that are not valid cognizers, because we can already discern this difference in reliance on our self-knowers or other valid cognizers.

Our own system's reply is that nonetheless, it is necessary to compose shastras because they help practitioners to counteract bewilderment with respect to the words of the Buddha and with respect to the methods for attaining liberation and Buddhahood. ("*Shastras counteract bewilderment,*").

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. When it comes to examining which awareness realizes that a valid cognizer satisfies the definition of valid cognizer, what are the two possibilities seen by the opponent at the beginning of this outline?
2. According to that opponent, what faults are there in these two possibilities?

3. What is Dharmottara's interpretation of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*"?
4. What are the two parts (the part directed outwards and the one directed inwards) with regard to an eye consciousness realizing blue?
5. Give/posit the meaning and an example of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer according to Dharmottara
6. Posit the meaning and an example of an other-ascertainment valid cognizer according to Dharmottara
7. What is a 'valid cognizer of *verbal convention*'?
8. What is the interpretation of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*" according to Prajnakaragupta?
9. What does ultimate truth refer to in the Chittamatra School?
10. What does conventional truth refer to in the Chittamatra School?
11. According to Prajnakaragupta's interpretation, why are valid cognizers realizing ultimate truth self-ascertainment valid cognizers?
12. According to Prajnakaragupta's interpretation, why are valid cognizers realizing conventional truths other-ascertainment valid cognizers?
13. What is the interpretation of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*" according to Devendrabodhi?
14. What fault is incurred if an opponent asserts that a self-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer inducing ascertainment of an object through its own power and an other-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of an object through its own power?
15. What fault is incurred if an opponent asserts that a self-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer inducing ascertainment of a consciousness through its own power and an other-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of a consciousness through its own power?
16. Why is an inferential cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass in the mental continuum of a follower of the Charvaka School not an other-ascertainment valid cognizer but a self-ascertainment valid cognizer?
17. What is the meaning of the line from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Shastras counteract bewilderment*"?

THE ATTRIBUTES

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Also that which elucidates an object not cognized.

Merely [being] non-deceptive does not fulfil the definition of *pramana* because it is **also** necessary to speak of **that which elucidates an object not cognized** before, *i.e.*, of a first, or new, cognition as a component of the definition [of *pramana*]. This indicates the characteristic that accords with the etymology of the original [Sanskrit] term *pramana*: being ‘*firstly* non-deceptive’ or ‘*newly* non-deceptive’.

When previously in the *Pramanavarttika* Dharmakirti presented the definition of *pramana* or valid cognizer, he *explicitly* explained only the component of being non-deceptive (*Pramanavarttika*: “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”).

However, one should not rely only on the explicit meaning of that line, for ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ does not qualify as the definition of valid cognizer. That definition is too broad because subsequent cognizers, such as the second moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue or a memory consciousness realizing a tree, are ‘knowers that are non-deceptive’ but not valid cognizers. They are not valid cognizers since they are not knowers that are *newly* non-deceptive. They are not knowers that are *newly* non-deceptive because they do not *newly* realize their objects. Subsequent cognizers do not newly realize their objects because they realize their objects in *dependence on or through the power of* former valid cognizers that realized the same objects.

A subsequent cognizer realizes its object through the power of an earlier valid cognizer, because a subsequent cognizer arises through the power of the earlier valid cognizer inducing the subsequent cognizer. Thus, subsequent cognizer is defined as: ‘a knower that is not a valid cognizer and that realizes what has already been realized by an earlier valid cognizer inducing it’.

Having previously in the *Pramanavarttika* introduced the definition of valid cognizer with the words, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”, here Dharmakirti says “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*” in order to emphasize that a valid cognizer is not only a consciousness that is non-deceptive but also a consciousness which elucidates or realizes an object that has not been cognized before. In other words, it is a consciousness that newly realizes its main object.

Therefore, Dharmakirti adds the attribute of ‘being new’ (*i.e.*, of newly getting at the object) since the definition of *pramana* or valid cognizer has two main components, (1) being new and (2) being non-deceptive.

This explanation is in accordance with the etymological meaning of the Sanskrit word *pramana*, for the first syllable ‘pra’ can be translated as “first” or “new”.¹¹

¹¹ This also explains why many scholars translate *pramana* as ‘prime cognizer’ when translating scriptures that set forth *pramana* from the perspective of the Vaibashika, Sautrantika, Chittamatra, or Madhyamika Svatantrika Schools (which assert that a valid cognizer is necessarily an awareness that *newly* realizes its object).

The term ‘prime cognizer’ is not used when referring to *pramana* from the perspective of the Madhyamika Prasangika School because proponents of this tenet system assert that any awareness which realizes its *main* object is *pramana*. According to the Prasangika School, even subsequent cognizers are *pramana*, which is why *pramana* is translated here as ‘valid cognizer’ instead of ‘prime cognizer’.

In Tibetan only one term is used to translate *pramana* (*tshad ma*) whatever the tenet system. This is why, in an attempt to reflect the same sentiment, I chose to translate *pramana* as ‘valid cognizer’, a term that is acceptable from the point of view all four tenet schools.

Someone says that the earlier [definition, ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’] and this one [‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’] are synonymous definitions of *pramana*.

Here, “someone” refers to Devendrabodhi who argues that both ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ (indicated earlier in the line, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”) and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ (indicated in the line, “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*”) can serve as the definition of valid cognizer.

[Response:] This is not feasible because with regard to those two, different generic images arise. [Therefore] the isolates of their definiendums must be different.

Our own system’s response is that it is not correct to assert that both ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ qualify as the definition of valid cognizer, because these two appear differently to a conceptual consciousness and thus have different generic images. This means that the generic image of ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is different from the generic image of ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’. Therefore, even if both were definitions, they could not serve as the definition of a single definiendum, *i.e.*, of valid cognizer, but instead would have to be definitions of different definiendums. This is because a single definiendum cannot have different definitions.

Also, [someone] says that the earlier [line, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”] indicates the definition of conventional *pramana* and this [line, “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*”] indicates the definition of ultimate *pramana*.

Here, someone presents a debate based on Prajnakaragupta’s commentary, claiming that the line (“*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”) sets forth the definition of conventional valid cognizer, while this line, “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*” sets forth the definition of ultimate valid cognizer.

In other words, according to this opponent, ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is the definition of conventional valid cognizer and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ is the definition of ultimate valid cognizer.

Please note that conventional valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, conventional truth, while ultimate valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, ultimate truth.

Even though in general, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is set forth from the point of view of the Sautrantika School, since this passage is based on Prajnakaragupta’s commentary — a treatise presented from the perspective of the Chittamattra School — this passage is also presented from the perspective of that philosophical system.

Therefore, ultimate truth here refers to emptiness according to the Chittamattra School (*i.e.*, the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities), while conventional truth refers to all phenomena other than ultimate truth.

[Response:] This is not feasible either, for if that were the case it would follow that an ultimate *pramana* is a conventional *pramana* because [an ultimate *pramana*] is a consciousness which is non-deceptive. Also, it would follow that a conventional *pramana* would be an ultimate *pramana* because [a conventional *pramana*] is that which elucidates an object not cognized [before].

Our response is that the opponent’s assertion is logically flawed because it would follow that an ultimate valid cognizer would be a conventional valid cognizer, and a conventional valid cognizer would be an ultimate valid cognizer.

An ultimate valid cognizer would be a conventional valid cognizer, because an ultimate valid cognizer would satisfy the opponent's alleged definition of conventional valid cognizer. It would satisfy the opponent's alleged definition of conventional valid cognizer, because an ultimate valid cognizer is 'a knower that is non-deceptive'.

Likewise, a conventional cognizer would be an ultimate valid cognizer, because a conventional valid cognizer would satisfy the opponent's alleged definition of ultimate valid cognizer. It would satisfy that definition, because a conventional valid cognizer is 'that which elucidates an object not cognized before'.

If someone says that the meaning [of the line "*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*"] is: 'It is an ultimate *pramana* because it is that which newly elucidates ultimate [truth] not cognized [before].'

In support of the opponent above, someone may contend that the line "*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*" indicates only ultimate valid cognizers since the meaning of this line is that a particular ultimate valid cognizer 'is an ultimate valid cognizer, because it is that which newly elucidates an ultimate truth not cognized before.'

[Response:] It follows that the former line also indicates ultimate *pramana* because it is permissible to say, "It is *pramana* with regard to ultimate [truth] because it is non-deceptive with regard to ultimate [truth]."

Our response is that the reason this opponent gives is not correct, because it contradicts the opponent's assertion that the former line ("*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*") only indicates conventional valid cognizers. It contradicts that assertion because it would follow that the earlier line also indicates ultimate valid cognizers. It would follow that the earlier line also indicates ultimate valid cognizers since it is permissible or correct to say that a particular ultimate valid cognizer "is a valid cognizer with regard to ultimate truth, because it is non-deceptive with regard to ultimate truth."

Further, since one would have to accept that this [line, "*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*"] also indicates the definition of conventional *pramana*, it is not feasible to separate [the meaning of the two lines].

Moreover, if one accepts that the line, "*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*" indicates not only ultimate valid cognizers but also conventional valid cognizers, one also needs to accept that this line not only sets forth the definition of ultimate valid cognizer but also the definition of conventional valid cognizer.

However, it is untenable to hold that this line presents the definition of each of these valid cognizers. Instead, it is more feasible to accept that the former and latter lines both set forth the definition of valid cognizer in general.

The way these two lines set forth the definition of valid cognizer is as follows: the former line explicitly presents the definition's component of being 'a knower that is non-deceptive' and implicitly the component of 'being new'.

The latter line, on the other hand, explicitly presents the definition of valid cognizer, for it explicitly sets forth the two main components of the definition of (1) being new ("*not cognized [before]*") and (2) being non-deceptive ("*that which elucidates an object*").

[Someone:] Well, then, what about Prajnakaragupta's explanation to that effect?

An opponent asks about Prajnakaragupta's explanation which appears to contradict the response given by our own system, since according to his commentary, Prajnakaragupta seems to say that the latter line does set forth the definition of ultimate valid cognizer.

[Response:] [His explanation] indicates that the words of the definition [are applicable] to an instant of an ultimate [*pramana*]. But [Prajnakaragupta] does not claim that [the two lines] indicate different definitions, since [one] is able [to understand that] in dependence on [Prajnakaragupta] only indicating [that the two lines set forth] the general definition of *pramana*.

Our own system's response is that in his commentary, Prajnakaragupta points out that the words expressing the definition of valid cognizer are applicable to an *instant* of an ultimate valid cognizer; in other words, he says that whatever is an ultimate valid cognizer is suitable to be called "a knower that is newly non-deceptive". However, this does not mean he contends that the latter line expresses the definition of ultimate valid cognizer and that the two lines set forth different definitions.

That Prajnakaragupta does not hold that the two lines set forth different definitions becomes obvious in dependence on the fact that Prajnakaragupta only indicates that the two lines set forth the *general* definition of *pramana*.

[Someone:] If *pramana* were that which newly elucidates an object, then a subsequent cognizer ascertaining blue would also be *pramana*, because it newly elucidates a generic image.

Here, someone starts a new debate. The person argues that according to the latter line ("Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized"), a subsequent cognizer, such as a memory consciousness realizing blue (which has been induced by the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates an object. The memory consciousness realizing blue newly elucidates an object because it newly elucidates the generic image of blue. The memory consciousness realizing blue newly elucidates the generic image of blue because it newly elucidates the generic image of blue that appears to that memory consciousness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*After having realized its own nature, (5)
A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*

[Response:] **After** a direct perceiver [*pramana*] has **realized** [the color] blue's **own** uncommon **nature**, a **consciousness** apprehending a **generic** [image] **is attained** through the power of that [former direct perceiver *pramana*] — but without that [later consciousness] having the capacity to determine its object through its own power.

Here, a *consciousness apprehending a generic image* refers to a conceptual consciousness. A conceptual consciousness is a *consciousness apprehending a generic image* because to a conceptual consciousness, a generic image (of its main object) appears. This is explained below.

Our own system's response is that a subsequent cognizer, such as the memory consciousness realizing blue (which has been induced by the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) is not a valid cognizer because that memory consciousness has arisen through the power of a former valid cognizer and does not realize its object, blue, through its own power. The memory consciousness realizing blue has arisen through the power of a former valid cognizer because it has arisen through the power of the first moment of an eye consciousness (an eye direct perceiver) which realized the color blue's own uncommon nature, blue. Therefore, the memory consciousness does not realize blue through its own power but through the power of the former eye consciousness which induced the memory.

Please note that the memory consciousness is a conceptual consciousness and thus unable to directly realize its main object, blue. Instead, it realizes blue indirectly by way

of the appearance of the generic image (also called 'mental image' or 'meaning generality', (*don spyi*) of blue.

The generic image of blue is a representation of blue, not blue itself; it serves as an intermediate object that allows the conceptual consciousness to get at blue. The generic image is a subjective representation of blue in that it encompasses what we *mean* when we say "blue". This constructed representation or generic image of blue enables a conceptual awareness to remember and realize blue. Without the appearance of that generic image, a conceptual consciousness would not be able to apprehend or think about blue, since a conceptual consciousness does not function like a direct perceiver (*e.g.*, an eye consciousness realizing blue) to which the color blue appears clearly or 'nakedly', without the medium of a generic image.

Furthermore, both the generic image of blue *and* blue appear to the memory consciousness realizing blue, even though the generic image of blue is a permanent phenomenon while blue is impermanent.

Yet the generic image of blue and blue appear mingled or mixed; the generic image of blue appears to be the actual color blue and the actual color blue appears to be the generic image of blue, so that the person in whose continuum the memory consciousness arises is unable to differentiate between the appearance of blue and the appearance of the generic image of blue.

However, although to that memory consciousness both blue and the generic image of blue appear, the memory consciousness realizes only blue; it does not realize the generic image of blue. The generic image of blue merely appears to it. Hence, the memory consciousness is not a valid cognizer because although the generic image of blue newly appears to it, the memory consciousness does not newly *elucidate* the generic image of blue. The memory consciousness does not newly elucidate the generic image of blue because it does not newly *realize* the generic image of blue.

Alternatively, the passages [of the *Pramanavarttika*] below can be combined with someone saying that **after having realized** blue's **own nature**, a **consciousness** apprehending a **generic** [image] is generated. That very [consciousness] **attains** [the status] of being *pramana*.

In this passage Gyaltsab Je provides another interpretation of the two lines, "*After having realized its own nature / A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*"

While above, Gyaltsab Je presents the two lines as referring to our own system's response to the opponent who argues that a subsequent cognizer realizing blue is a valid cognizer, here, he presents the two lines as referring to that same opponent's debate.

According to this second interpretation, the opponent says that subsequent to the first moment of an eye consciousness that realized blue's own nature, a memory consciousness arises. That memory consciousness newly elucidates the generic image of blue and thus attains the status of being a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, it is a valid cognizer.

Furthermore, according to the second interpretation, the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* cited below ("*A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized / Since 'that which cognizes' is the thought / Since one is to analyze the self-characterized*") can be combined with the two lines here ("*After having realized its own nature / A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*"), in the sense that the latter three lines constitute our own system's response to these two lines.

[Response:] [*Pramana* apprehending a generic image] either (a) apprehends a generic image that is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon or (b) it apprehends a generic image [by means of] a self-characterized phenomenon appearing to [the *pramana*].

Our response is that a valid cognizer apprehending a generic image either (a) apprehends a generic image that is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon or (b) it apprehends a generic image by means of a self-characterized appearing to that valid cognizer.

According to the Sautrantika School, self-characterized (*rang mtshan*, also called ‘specifically characterized’) and impermanent are equivalent. An impermanent phenomenon, such as a table, is a self-characterized phenomenon because when it appears to a direct perceiver, such as an eye consciousness, it appears with all the impermanent characteristics of the table that are in the sphere of vision of the eye consciousness (the table’s color, shape, subtle particles, impermanence, and so forth)

The opposite of self-characterized is generally-characterized. Generally-characterized (*spyi mtshan*) and permanent are equivalent. A permanent phenomenon, such as unconditioned space or ‘absence of elephant on the table’, is generally-characterized because, according to the Sautrantika School, permanent phenomena can appear only to conceptual consciousnesses, not to direct perceivers; and when they appear to a conceptual consciousness they only appear with their distinguishing general characteristics.¹²

Returning to our response, a *valid cognizer apprehending a generic image* refers to a valid cognizer to which a generic image appears. In other words, a *valid cognizer apprehending a generic image* refers to a valid cognizer that is a conceptual consciousness.

Therefore, our own system’s response is that with regard to a conceptual valid cognizer to which a generic image appears, there are two possibilities:

- (a) The generic image that appears to the conceptual valid cognizer is not based on or connected to a self-characterized (*i.e.*, impermanent) phenomenon, or
- (b) A self-characterized phenomenon appears to the conceptual valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized,

If it is (a): it follows it is impossible for there to be *pramana* that apprehends an independent generic image, because if [a consciousness] is *pramana*, either it newly cognizes **a self-characterized phenomenon** that was **not cognized** before, or it is based on [a self-characterized phenomenon].

It is impossible for the generic image (a generally-characterized phenomenon) that appears to a conceptual valid cognizer not to be based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon, because there is no valid cognizer to which an *independent* generic image appears. There is no valid cognizer to which an *independent* generic image appears because if an awareness is a valid cognizer, either it newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon or, if it does not realize a self-characterized phenomenon, it is based at least on a self-characterized phenomenon.

Please note that here, an ‘independent generic image’ refers to a generic image that does not depend on, *i.e.*, that is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.

¹² Anne Klein writes in *Knowledge and Liberation* [Snow Lion: New York, 1986], p. 36:

“For example, uncaused space — the mere lack of obstructive contact — is not produced from causes and conditions and has no specific features that can cast their aspects to a directly perceiving consciousness, such as the eye consciousness. Uncaused space has only one distinguishing general characteristic not shared with other phenomena; namely, its lack of obstructiveness. This is a specific characteristic of space in the sense of being unshared with any other phenomenon; however it is the only significant characteristic of *all* instances of space. This common or general characteristic of space can fully appear to thought. Thus, although thought is obscured from fully perceiving uncommon specific characteristics it is capable of fully perceiving general ones.”

An example of a valid cognizer that newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a chair. To such an eye consciousness, an independent generic image does not appear because it is a direct perceiver which gets at its object (the chair) directly, without the appearance of a generic image (*i.e.*, without the appearance of a generic image of the chair).

An example of a valid cognizer that newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon and to which a generic image appears is the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body. To that inferential cognizer, a generic image of the impermanence of the body appears. However, the generic image of the impermanence of the body is not an *independent* generic image because it is based on a self-characterized phenomenon. It is based on a self-characterized phenomenon because it is based on *the impermanence of the body*. The generic image of the impermanence of the body is based on *the impermanence of the body* because that generic image appears in dependence on the inferential cognizer taking to mind *the impermanence of the body*.

Nor do *independent* generic images appear to valid cognizers realizing generally-characterized phenomena, because their generic images must indirectly be based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.

For instance, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the selflessness of John realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon because it realizes the selflessness of John, which is permanent. However, the generic image of that valid cognizer (the generic image of the selflessness of John) is not an independent generic image because it is indirectly based on a self-characterized phenomenon. It is indirectly based on a self-characterized phenomenon because it is indirectly based on John. The generic image of the selflessness of John is indirectly based on John because it is directly based on the selflessness of John, while the selflessness of John is directly based on John.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Since ‘that which cognizes’ is the thought,

If it is (b): although there are *pramana* apprehending a generic [image], it does not follow that there is the fault of a subsequent cognizer being *pramana*, because ‘those pursuing results will eventually engage in **that which** newly **cognizes** a self-characterized phenomenon, along with its object’ **is the thought** when talking of *pramana* apprehending a generic image as a means of [cultivating a yogic direct perceiver] and when talking of ‘*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*’ as a component of the definition of *pramana*.

If it is (b) (*i.e.*, the case of conceptual consciousnesses to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears): although there are conceptual *valid cognizers* to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears, this does not mean that a subsequent cognizer to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears (such as a memory consciousness to which the generic image of blue appears) is a valid cognizer.

This is because when Buddhist masters like Dignaga talk of a conceptual valid cognizer as a means or cause for cultivating a yogic direct perceiver or when they talk of the line “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*” as indicating the component of the definition of valid cognizer, the intent or thought behind these words is that ‘those working towards attaining the resultant state of liberation or Buddhahood will eventually meditate on a valid cognizer newly realizing a self-characterized phenomenon (such as a yogic direct perceiver realizing impermanence) and on its object (impermanence)’.

The meaning of the last paragraphs is as follows:¹³ the opponent’s claim that a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer is based on the opponent’s assertion that an *awareness*

¹³ The following explanation is according to Geshe Wangchen’s commentary, *The Pervasive Rain of Utpala Flowers of Eloquent Speech* (*legs bshad utpala’i gru char*), p. 203.

apprehending a generic image (i.e., a conceptual consciousness to which a generic image appears) is an awareness to which an *independent* generic image appears. In other words, the opponent holds that the generic image that appears to a conceptual consciousness is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.

Therefore, according to this assertion, a memory consciousness that has been induced by a direct valid cognizer realizing blue is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates its object, the generic image of blue. It newly elucidates the generic image of blue because the generic image of blue is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon (such as blue) and because the generic image appears newly and through the power of the memory consciousness.

However, as explained above, an *independent* generic image is impossible because a valid cognizer either newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon (which means that in the case of a conceptual consciousness, the generic image is based on the self-characterized phenomenon that is realized), or it newly realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon that is based on a self-characterized phenomenon.

In the case of a conceptual consciousness to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears (e.g., an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body): although there is a conceptual *valid cognizer* to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears (e.g., the *first* moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body), this does not mean that a subsequent cognizer (e.g., the *second* moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body or the memory consciousness realizing blue) is a valid cognizer.

The reason is that a conceptual consciousness realizes its object of comprehension by means of the appearance of the generic image of that object, even though the object of comprehension does not appear clearly or ‘nakedly’, the way it appears to a direct perceiver. And it is in reliance on such an ‘indirect’ realization of an object of comprehension by a conceptual valid cognizer that practitioners aspiring towards the attainment of liberation or Buddhahood will eventually engage in a direct realization of self-characterized phenomena, bringing them closer to their goals.

Hence, it is with this fact in mind that Buddhist masters like Dignaga talk of conceptual valid cognizers serving as a means or cause for the attainment of yogic direct perceivers directly realizing self-characterized phenomena, such as subtle impermanence, and so forth.

Likewise, it is with this fact in mind that Buddhist masters like Dignaga talk about the attribute of *newly elucidating* an object (an object which is either self-characterized or based on a self-characterized phenomenon) as a component of the definition of valid cognizer, when explaining the meaning of the line, “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*”.

Please note that the valid cognizers in which Buddhist practitioners will eventually engage or on which they will meditate are *yogic* direct perceivers (“those pursuing results will eventually engage in **that which** newly **cognizes** a self-characterized phenomenon”).

These yogic direct perceivers newly cognize self-characterized phenomena because they are direct perceivers, and because according to the Sautrantika School, whatever is a direct perceiver necessarily apprehends a self-characterized phenomenon. Whatever is a direct perceiver necessarily apprehends a self-characterized phenomenon, because the proponents of the Sautrantika hold that only self-characterized phenomena can appear to direct perceivers; generally-characterized phenomena cannot appear to such non-conceptual awarenesses.

Yet this does not mean that direct perceivers do not *realize* generally-characterized phenomena. Direct perceivers realize generally-characterized phenomena but without these generally-characterized phenomena appearing to the direct perceivers.

Furthermore, since all awarenesses have an appearing object, a direct perceiver necessarily has an appearing object that is a self-characterized phenomenon.

Thus, when a direct perceiver realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon, it also realizes a self-characterized phenomenon. It realizes the generally-characterised phenomenon which does not appear to it, and it realizes the self-characterized phenomenon which appears to it.

For instance, the yogic direct perceiver realizing the selflessness of John realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon, because it realizes the selflessness of John (which is generally-characterized). But the selflessness of John does not appear to that direct perceiver.

Instead, a self-characterized phenomenon, John's *aggregates which are devoid of a self* (i.e., devoid of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self) appear to that direct perceivers.

Therefore, that yogic direct perceiver realizes the selflessness of John without the selflessness appearing to it, and it realizes John's aggregates which are devoid of a self whilst those aggregates appear to the yogic direct perceiver.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed. (6)

Those pursuing results eventually have to engage in *pramana* realizing a self-characterized phenomenon, along with its object, because they are **to analyze** the two positions, the existence or non-existence of the **self-characterized phenomenon** that is mainly pursued.

Those aspiring towards attaining the resultant state of liberation or Buddhahood eventually have to engage in, that is, meditate on a valid cognizer realizing a self-characterized phenomenon (i.e., a yogic direct perceiver), because in order to reach their goal they need to investigate whether the self-characterized phenomenon they aspire to attain (such as the omniscient mind of a Buddha) exists or not.

In this regard Acharya Devendrabodhi explicitly finds fault with [the idea that] whatever is the object of comprehension of *pramana* is necessarily a self-characterized phenomenon and says that the meaning of this passage is that [whatever is the object of comprehension of *pramana*] is necessarily based upon a self-characterized phenomenon

When in his commentary Acharya Devendrabodhi expresses disapproval of the notion that any object of a valid cognizer must be a self-characterized phenomenon, he is criticizing the assumption that valid cognizers do not realize generally-characterized phenomena.

Also, Devendrabodhi points out that the meaning of the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* ("A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized / Since 'that which cognizes' is the thought / Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed") is that the object of comprehension of a valid cognizer is necessarily *based on* or *connected to* a self-characterized phenomenon.

Alternatively, the following is explained:

An alternate explanation is given with regard to the meaning of the last three lines of the *Pramanavarttika*. However, the wording of the last three lines in relation to this second interpretation differs from the usual wording (as cited above).

Furthermore, the second interpretation is not given from the point of view of the Sautrantika School but from the point of view of the Chittamatra School.

[Someone:] Since all functioning things have two modes of existence: (a) self-characterized and (b) generally-characterized phenomena, a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer because it elucidates the suchness of the generic [image].

An opponent asserts that since functioning things, *i.e.*, impermanent phenomena have two modes of existence: (a) self-characterized and (b) generally-characterized phenomena, a conceptual subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates the suchness of the generic image that appears to the subsequent cognizer.

‘Impermanent phenomena have the mode of existence of self-characterized phenomena’ because they are self-characterized and because they have characteristics that are self-characterized. For instance, an oak table has the mode of existence of self-characterized phenomena, since it itself is self-characterized and since its characteristics of being a table, impermanent, a product, etc., are self-characterized.

Likewise, ‘impermanent phenomena have the mode of existence of generally-characterized phenomena’ because they have characteristics that are generally-characterized or permanent. Taking the example of the oak table, although the oak table is not generally-characterized, its characteristics of being an object of knowledge, an object of a conceptual consciousness, selfless etc., are generally-characterized.

As impermanent phenomena have those two modes of existence, the opponent argues that a subsequent cognizer, such as the memory consciousness realizing blue, must be a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates the mode of existence or suchness of the generic image of blue. It newly elucidates the suchness of the generic image of blue because according to the opponent, the generic image that appears to that conceptual consciousness is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon, and thus newly elucidates the suchness of the generic image of blue through its own power.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*As for a self-characterized phenomenon being cognized,
Since a consciousness will not know [two dissimilar modes of existence], owing to the
mentalities
Since [that which is established by way of its] own characteristics is to be
analyzed.*

As mentioned above, the wording of the three lines according to the second interpretation is different from the usual wording of the three lines (“A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized / Since ‘that which cognizes’ is the thought / Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed”).

[Response:] It follows that there is no fault such that it [would] follow that [an awareness] conceiving an independent generic [image] was a valid cognizer, because when **a consciousness** analyzes **a self-characterized phenomenon**, it **will not** come to **know** two dissimilar [modes of existence], but only the uncommon mode of existence, the non-dual suchness [of that self-characterized phenomenon].

Our own system’s response is that it does not follow that a conceptual subsequent cognizer apprehending an *independent* generic image (*i.e.*, a generic image that is not based on a self-characterized phenomenon) is a valid cognizer because such a conceptual subsequent valid cognizer does not newly elucidate the suchness of the generic image. It does not newly elucidate the suchness of the generic image because according to the Chittamatra School there is no other suchness except for emptiness.

Therefore, when an awareness engages in ultimate analysis of a self-characterized phenomenon it will find the uncommon ultimate mode of existence, the non-dual suchness or emptiness of that self-characterized phenomenon (*i.e.*, the lack of external existence of that phenomenon, or the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities).

This is also true from the point of view of the Madhyamika Svatantrika and the Madhyamika Prasangika School, for they also assert that when an awareness engages in ultimate analysis of a phenomenon, it will find the ultimate mode of existence or ultimate truth of that phenomenon. The difference is that according to the two Madhyamika systems, ultimate truth or emptiness does not refer to the lack of external existence or the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities. Instead, proponents of the Madhyamika Svatantrika assert that emptiness refers to the lack of true existence while the proponents of the Madhyamika Prasangika School hold that emptiness refers to the lack of inherent existence.

[Someone:] Well, then, why did [the Buddha] speak of external objects, and so forth?

An opponent asks why the Buddha spoke of external objects (*e.g.*, during the First Wheel of Dharma and in the *Sutra of the Ten Bhūmis*) and of subject and object being different substantial entities, if, according to the Chittamatra School, there are no external phenomena, and subject and object are not different substantial entities?

[Response:] There is a purpose for speaking of those, because the Buddha spoke [of those] on account of disciples' **mentalities**, in order to gradually lead them to suchness.

According to the Chittamatra School, although there are no external phenomena, the Buddha set forth the existence of external phenomena in keeping with disciples' mentalities, *i.e.*, their predispositions, interests, and inclinations. By teaching them external existence, etc., the Buddha prevented some of his disciples from generating false views of nihilism and instead, was able to gradually lead them to the correct views of suchness, and so forth.

There are no two dissimilar modes of existence, because when one **analyzes** functioning things' mode of subsistence which is [established by way of its] **own characteristics**, there is nothing other than non-dual suchness, the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities.

There is no ultimate mode of existence other than suchness or emptiness, because when one examines the ultimate mode of subsistence of functioning things, one will find only non-dual suchness or emptiness, which refers to the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities or the lack of external existence.

According to the Chittamatra School, the ultimate mode of subsistence or emptiness of functioning things is established by way of its own characteristics.

In brief, under this heading Dharmakīrti sets forth the attribute of "being new", which is the other main component — next to "being non-deceptive" — of the definition of valid cognizer. The words from the *Pramanavarttika* which express this attribute are "*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*". In other words, an awareness such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer, because it is a consciousness which elucidates an object that has not been cognized before, *i.e.*, it newly realizes its main object.

An opponent says that a memory consciousness realizing blue, which was induced by and arises after a valid cognizer realizing blue's own nature (*i.e.*, blue), is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates the generic image of blue. It newly elucidates the generic image of blue, because that generic image exists independently of any self-characterized

phenomenon and because it newly appears to the memory consciousness. (*"After having realized its own nature / A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained."*)

Our own system's response is that there is no valid cognizer to which an independent generic image appears because a valid cognizer either newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon or it is based on a self-characterized phenomenon. (*"A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized"*).

In the case of a conceptual valid cognizer which realizes a self-characterized phenomenon (such as the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body), the generic image that appears to that conceptual consciousness does not exist independently of a self-characterized phenomenon because it is based on the self-characterized phenomenon (the impermanence of the body) that is realized by the consciousness.

In the case of a conceptual valid cognizer which realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon (such as the first moment of the inferential cognizer realizing the selflessness of John), the generic image does not exist independently of a self-characterized phenomenon because it is based indirectly on the self-characterized phenomenon (John) that is the basis for the selflessness realized by that valid cognizer.

Also, even though there are conceptual valid cognizers to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears, this does not mean that a subsequent cognizer to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears is a valid cognizer.

This is because when Buddhist masters like Dignaga describe a conceptual valid cognizer as a cause for cultivating a yogic direct perceiver and when they explain that the line *"Also that which elucidates an object not cognized"* indicates the components of the definition of valid cognizer, the thought behind these words is that 'those who strive towards attaining liberation or Buddhahood will eventually meditate on a valid cognizer newly realizing a self-characterized phenomenon (such as a yogic direct perceiver realizing impermanence) and on its object (impermanence)'. (*"Since 'that which cognizes' is the thought,"*)

Those who strive to attain liberation or Buddhahood eventually have to meditate on a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, a yogic direct perceiver newly realizing a self-characterized phenomenon, because in order to reach their goal they have to examine whether the self-characterized result they aspire to attain (*e.g.*, omniscience) exists or not. (*"Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed."*)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the 'attribute' indicated under this heading?
2. What is the difference between the two lines of the *Pramanavarttika* (*"Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness"* and *"Also that which elucidates an object not cognized"*), each of which indicates the definition of valid cognizer?
3. Who is the opponent asserting that both 'a knower that is non-deceptive' (indicated in the line, *"Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness"*) and 'that which elucidates an object not cognized before' (indicated in the line, *"Also that which elucidates an object not cognized"*) can serve as the definition of valid cognizer? Why is this assertion wrong?
4. Why is it wrong to assert that the former line, *"Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness"* indicates the definition of conventional valid cognizer and the latter line, *"Also that which elucidates an object not cognized"* indicates the definition of ultimate valid cognizer?

5. What is the reason for the opponent's assertion that a memory consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer?
6. How does our own system refute the assertion that a memory consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer?
7. What is the generic image of blue and how does it appear to the memory consciousness realizing blue?
8. Why are there no independent generic images?
9. What is the intent or thought of Buddhist masters like Dignaga when they explain that a conceptual valid cognizer is the cause of yogic direct perceivers and that the line, "*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*" indicates the components of the definition of valid cognizer?
10. What is the alternative interpretation of the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* that is presented from the point of view of the Chittamatra School?

SHOWING THAT THE MUNI ALSO POSSESSES THAT DEFINITION (I.E., THAT THE MUNI IS A PRAMANA BEING OR THAT HIS AWARENESSES ARE PRAMANA)

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Applying (to the Muni) the meaning of *pramana* that has already been explained
- (2) Explaining the meaning of 'has become [a *pramana* being]'

APPLYING (TO THE MUNI) THE MEANING OF PRAMANA THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Possessing that [pramana] the Bhagavan is the very pramana.

Regarding the subject, the Muni, **the Bhagavan**, he **is the very *pramana*** with regard to the mode of existence and the varieties of phenomena, because he **possesses** consciousnesses that are newly non-deceptive with regard to all those, and because he is [newly non-deceptive].

Under this heading the meaning or definition of valid cognizer (that was explained above) is applied to the Buddha.

As mentioned before, the Buddha is not an actual valid cognizer because the Buddha is not a consciousness. However, the Buddha can be called "valid cognizer" because he is a *valid cognizer being* (*tshad ma'i skye bu*). He is a *valid cognizer being* because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says: regarding the subject, Buddha Shakyamuni, he is the very valid cognizer, *i.e.*, he can be called "valid cognizer" or he is a *valid cognizer being* with regard to the mode of existence and the varieties of all phenomena, because his awarenesses are 'knowers that are newly non-deceptive' with regard to the mode of existence and the varieties of phenomena, and because the Buddha himself is newly non-deceptive.

Please note that the mode of existence of phenomena (*ji lta ba*) refers to ultimate truths and the varieties of phenomena (*ji snyed pa*) refer to conventional truths.

So the Buddha can be called "valid cognizer", or he is a *valid cognizer being*, because all of his awarenesses simultaneously and newly realize all phenomena — conventional and

ultimate truths — and because the Buddha himself is newly non-deceptive with regard to those phenomena.

Saying that the Buddha is non-deceptive does not just indicate that the Buddha realizes all phenomena of the past, present, and future; it also emphasizes the fact that the Buddha is able to guide and instruct sentient beings in the most beneficial and effective way, provided they have the karma to receive such guidance and instruction.

With respect to the translation [of that line] in Devendrabodhi's commentary, Devendrabodhi applies an example by saying "*in the same way*".

According to the Tibetan translation of Devendrabodhi's commentary, the line quoted from the *Pramanavarttika* is slightly different. Instead of "*Possessing that [pramana] the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*", Devendrabodhi's commentary says, "*In the same way the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*"

Here, the words "in the same way" describe the Bhagavan as an example of a valid cognizer. This means that in the same way as 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' is called a "valid cognizer", the Buddha can be called "valid cognizer" (though he is not an actual valid cognizer) because the Buddha is newly non-deceptive with regard to all phenomena.

Now this is investigated:

Next follows an investigation of the Buddha's omniscient consciousness by an opponent:

[Someone:] Omniscient consciousnesses either (a) are or (b) are not valid cognizers with regard to all objects of knowledge.

If (b) they are not, it is pointless to make all those efforts to establish that the teacher is *pramana* by way of establishing that the teachings are *pramana*; and it will not be feasible to differentiate between our own teacher and other teachers as being or not being [worthy] to be followed.

Someone says: either the Buddha's omniscient consciousnesses (a) are valid cognizers, *i.e.*, 'knowers that are newly non-deceptive' with regard to all objects of knowledge, or (b) they are not.

If (b) omniscient consciousnesses were not valid cognizers, it would not be possible to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* or that he is reliable by way of establishing that his teachings are reliable, because the Buddha would not necessarily newly realize all objects of knowledge.

Also, it would not be reasonable to distinguish the Buddha from other teachers as being able to take disciples to liberation or Buddhahood.

If (a) they are, since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness directly and newly realizes all objects of knowledge, it is indeed *pramana*. [But] it follows that from the second moment onwards, [omniscient consciousnesses] are not *pramana*, because there is nothing to be newly realized.

Assuming that the Buddha's omniscient consciousnesses are valid cognizers, the opponent presents the following debate:

The first moment of the omniscient consciousness that arises in the mental continuum of the first moment of the Buddha (*i.e.*, at the moment when the Buddha has newly attained full enlightenment) is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes all objects of knowledge.

Yet, it follows that the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness are not valid cognizers because there is nothing to be newly realized.

There is nothing to be newly realized because the second and all subsequent moments realize what was already realized by the first moment of the omniscient consciousness.

If there is [something to be newly realized from the second moment onwards], since [the Buddha] has to exert himself in the methods to newly realize objects of comprehension, he has not already eliminated cognitive obstructions, for he is working towards newly accomplishing a path.

According to the opponent, if there were phenomena that the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness newly realized, then it follows that the first moment of the Buddha would not have eliminated cognitive obstructions.¹⁴ He would not have eliminated cognitive obstructions because he would be working to accomplish a path he would not yet have attained. The first moment of the Buddha would be working to accomplish a path he would not yet have attained because he would still be exerting himself to attain the methods to enable him to newly realize phenomena. He would still be exerting himself to attain the methods to enable him to newly realize phenomena because there would be phenomena he would not yet have newly realized. There would be phenomena that the first moment of the Buddha would not yet have newly realized because there would be phenomena that the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness would newly realize.

If one thinks that [the second moment of the omniscient consciousness] is a valid cognizer merely because it is non-deceptive, then it is pointless to talk of the attributes of being “first, or new, and non-deceptive”, and it is also impossible to refute [the idea] that a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer.

The opponent continues his debate by saying that if thought that the second moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it is a knower that is non-deceptive, then it would not make sense to set forth the two attributes or components of the definition of valid cognizer of (1) “being new” and (2) “being non-deceptive”.

Likewise, it would not be possible to refute the wrong idea that a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer, since a subsequent cognizer is a knower that is non-deceptive.

[Response:] In that regard this needs to be asked: Does the second moment of the omniscient consciousness (a) newly arise immediately after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness or (b) not? If (b) it does not, then it is necessary to accept [the first moment of the omniscient consciousness] to be permanent. If (a) it does, then since from the second moment onwards [omniscient consciousnesses] newly realize [their objects], they must be asserted to be valid cognizers.

In response to the opponent’s debate, our own system asks the following question: Does the second moment of the omniscient consciousness (a) newly arise at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness ceases, or (b) does it not?

If the second moment of the omniscient consciousness does not newly arise at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness ceases (*i.e.*, immediately after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness), the first moment of the omniscient consciousness is permanent. The first moment of the omniscient consciousness would be

¹⁴ There are two types of obstructions: (1) afflictive and (2) cognitive obstructions. In the Sautrantika School, there is no clear explanation of the two types of obstructions. According to the Chittamatra School, afflictive obstructions refer to awarenesses grasping at a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, the afflictions (such as anger, attachment, etc.) that are induced by those consciousnesses, and the seeds of both the foregoing. They are also described as obstructions to liberation, for they are the obstructions that need to be eliminated by a person aspiring to attain liberation.

Cognitive obstructions refer to the ignorance grasping at subject and object as being different substantial entities (or external existence) and the seed of that awareness. They are also referred to as obstructions to omniscience, because they are the obstructions a Bodhisattva aspiring to attain Buddhahood needs to eliminate (after having eliminated afflictive obstructions) in order to achieve omniscience.

permanent because it would not change moment by moment. It would not change moment by moment because, since the second moment of the omniscient consciousness did not arise immediately (or a moment) after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness, the first moment would remain in an unchanging state.

If the second moment of the omniscient consciousness newly arises immediately after the first moment, then, since the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness newly realize their object, they must be valid cognizers.

[Someone:] Since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards as yet-to-arise, there is nothing to be [newly] realized again [by the second and subsequent moments].

An opponent argues that since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness newly realizes the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness *as phenomena that will arise in the future*, or as *yet-to-arise*, the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

Since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness, there is nothing left to be newly realized from the second moment of the omniscient consciousness onwards.

[Response:] At the time of [the first moment of the omniscient consciousness] realizing [the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards as yet-to-arise], [the omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards either have or have not already arisen.

If they have already arisen, it is pointless to specify that they are yet-to-arise. If they have not yet [arisen], then since the factor of having-already-arisen is to be newly realized [by the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards, the idea that from the second moment onwards] there are no valid cognizers is undermined.

Our own system's response is that when the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness as yet-to-arise, the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness either (a) have already arisen or (b) have not yet arisen.

If (a) the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses have already arisen at the time of the first moment of the omniscient consciousness, it does not make sense to say that they are "yet-to-arise".

If (b) the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses have not yet arisen at the time of the first moment of the omniscient consciousness (realizing that the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards are yet-to-arise), then the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses are valid cognizers.

For instance, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes something that the first moment does not realize. It newly realizes something that the first moment does not realize because it newly realizes itself, *i.e.*, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness, as *having-arisen*.

Although the first moment of the omniscient consciousness also realizes the second moment, it realizes the second moment as *yet-to-arise* and not as *having-arisen*.

Likewise, the third moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes something that the first and the second moment do not realize. It newly realizes something that the first and the second moment do not realize because it newly realizes itself, *i.e.*, the third moment as *having-arisen*.

Although the first and the second moment of the omniscient consciousness also realize the third moment of the omniscient consciousness, they realize the third moment as *yet-to-arise* and not as *having-arisen*.

The same applies to the fourth and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

If it is not possible for there to be new objects of knowledge after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness has been generated, then whatever functioning thing there is would be permanent. If it is possible [for there to be new objects of knowledge], then since those new existents must be newly realized, [the idea that from the second moment onwards] there are no newly realizing valid cognizers is undermined.

If after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness (during the second or subsequent moments), there were no new phenomena, all functioning things, *i.e.*, impermanent phenomena would be permanent.

For instance, a chair that comes into existence at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness is a functioning thing and changes moment by moment. Therefore, the first moment of the chair exists simultaneously with the first moment of the omniscient consciousness. However, the first moment of the chair no longer exists during the second moment of the omniscient consciousness. Instead, during the second moment of the omniscient consciousness, the second moment of the chair will have come into existence.

However, if during the second moment of the omniscient consciousness there were no new objects of knowledge (such as the second moment of the chair), then functioning things (such as the first moment of the chair) would be permanent; they would not change moment by moment but remain in an unchanging state.

If after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness there *are* new phenomena, the notion that from the second moment onwards omniscient consciousnesses are not valid cognizers is undermined, because the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness will newly realize some functioning things as *having-arisen*.

For instance, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it not only *newly* realizes the second moment of the omniscient consciousness as *having-arisen*, it also *newly* realizes other phenomena, such as the second moment of the chair, as *having-arisen*.

In fact, since functioning things change moment by moment, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness *newly* realizes each moment of a functioning thing that exists simultaneously with the second moment of the omniscient consciousness as *having-arisen*.

Also, an eighth-bhumi [Bodhisattva] either (a) has or (b) has not become a Buddha. If (a) he has, then there would be a Buddha who has not eliminated middling-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation. If (b) he has not, then it is either possible or impossible for him to become a Buddha. If it were impossible, since it would be impossible for a sentient being to become a Buddha, there would be no one newly becoming a Buddha. Hence, it would be pointless [to discuss] the difference between the first moment of the omniscient consciousness [and subsequent omniscient consciousnesses].

If it is possible [for an eighth-bhumi Bodhisattva to become a Buddha], then when [that Bodhisattva], who was not [a Buddha] before, newly becomes a Buddha later on, it is definitely necessary to accept that [the omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards [in the continuum of other “older” Buddhas] newly realize that [new Buddha].

Our own system continues its reply by saying that a Bodhisattva on the eighth Bodhisattva *bhumi* or ground (a) either has or (b) has not attained Buddhahood.

If (a) a Bodhisattva on the eighth *bhumi* were to have attained Buddhahood, then there would be a fully enlightened Buddha who had not eliminated all objects of elimination of the path of meditation.¹⁵

Please note that the Mahayana path of meditation consists of ten levels (also called 'grounds' or 'bhumi'). On each level, Bodhisattvas eliminate different layers of obstructions. The obstructions that are eliminated on the path of meditation are described as 'objects of elimination of the path of meditation', and can be subdivided into nine different types or layers of obstructions. These nine types are referred to as (1) big-big, (2) middling-big, (3) small-big, (4) big-middling, (5) middling-middling, (6) small-middling, (7) big-small, (8) middling-small and (9) small-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation. The nine types of objects of elimination are eliminated gradually, with big-big objects of elimination being eliminated first and (9) small-small objects of elimination being eliminated last.

A Bodhisattva on the eighth *bhumi* still needs to attain the ninth and tenth *bhumi* before eliminating the subtlest obstructions and becoming a Buddha. The obstructions that are eliminated on the ninth *bhumi* are middling-small objects of elimination, and the obstructions that are eliminated on the tenth *bhumi* are small-small objects of elimination. Thus, the obstructions left in the continuum of a Bodhisattva on the eighth *bhumi* are middling-small and small-small objects of elimination.

Hence, if there were a Bodhisattva on that level who had attained the fully enlightened state of a Buddha, there would be a Buddha who had not eliminated middling-small and small-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation.

Please note that the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* only mentions middling-small objects of elimination ("If (a) he has, then there would be a Buddha who has not eliminated middling-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation"), for these words imply that if there were an eighth-*bhumi* Bodhisattva who had become a Buddha, there would also be a Buddha who had not eliminated small-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation.

The reason is that if a person has not eliminated middling-small objects of elimination he has not eliminated small-small objects of elimination, because the elimination of small-small objects of elimination is preceded by the elimination of middling-small objects of elimination.

Returning to our own system's reply: If (b) a Bodhisattva on the eighth *bhumi* has not attained Buddhahood, either it is possible for him to eventually remove all obstructions and become a Buddha, or it is not [possible].

If it were impossible for such a Bodhisattva to become a Buddha, there would be no-one who could attain enlightenment. If there were no one who could attain enlightenment, no one would attain an omniscient consciousness, and thus it would be pointless to discuss the difference between the first moment and subsequent moments of an omniscient consciousness.

If it is possible for an eighth-*bhumi* Bodhisattva to become a Buddha, then when that Bodhisattva eventually newly attains Buddhahood, the second and subsequent moments of omniscient consciousnesses in the continuum of other Buddhas who attained Buddhahood before will *newly* realize that Buddha as having newly become a Buddha.

¹⁵ The Mahayana path of meditation is the fourth of the five Mahayana paths, which are different levels of consciousness. The first four paths (the Mahayana path of accumulation, the Mahayana path of preparation, the Mahayana path of seeing, and the Mahayana path of meditation) take a Bodhisattva to the fifth path, the Mahayana path of no-more-learning, which refers to the omniscient consciousness of a Buddha.

This is another reason why, from the second moment onwards, there are omniscient consciousnesses that are valid cognizers.

[Someone:] If [an omniscient consciousness] explicitly realizes the present, it is impossible for that omniscient consciousness to be unable to implicitly realize that all the ‘yet-to-arise’ (future things) and ‘already-arisen’ (past things) are the cause and effect of the ‘present’ (thing). Therefore, we assert that it is impossible [for omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards to realize new objects of comprehension.

Here, an opponent argues that when the first moment of the omniscient consciousness explicitly realizes a present functioning thing, such as a present car (*i.e.*, a car that exists at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness), it must implicitly realize the causes of that car (‘the things that have already arisen’) and the results of that car (‘the things that are yet to arise’).

Therefore, since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness newly realizes the past, present, and future – and thus ‘that which has already arisen’ and ‘that which is yet to arise’ – with regard to the car (as well as with regard to all other functioning things), there is nothing left to be newly realized by the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

[Response:] If we say: it follows that with regard to the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing there will be no dharmata that is newly realized, because there is no degeneration of the realization of dharmata that has already taken place on the path of preparation which is the cause [of the Mahayana path of seeing] – what will be your reply?

In response, our own system says: it follows that the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing¹⁶ is not a valid cognizer, because it does not newly realize dharmata (*chos nyid*)¹⁷. The first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing does not newly realize dharmata because the Mahayana path of preparation, which is the cause of the Mahayana path of seeing, already realized dharmata and that realization has not degenerated.

[Someone:] Although there is nothing other than just dharmata itself that is newly realized [by the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing], since the manifest factor of dharmata must be newly realized, the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing is a valid cognizer.

The opponent says that the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing realizes nothing but dharmata (which has already been realized by the path of preparation) and is therefore not considered to be a valid cognizer from realizing an object other than dharmata that has not been realized before. Nonetheless, since the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing newly realizes the manifest factor of dharmata¹⁸, *i.e.*, it *directly* realizes dharmata for the first time, it is accepted to be a valid cognizer.

¹⁶ The Mahayana path of seeing refers to the third of the five Mahayana paths. In general, the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing is a meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness for the first time. Although Bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation and preparation also realize emptiness, they realize emptiness conceptually, *i.e.*, through the medium of a mental image.

¹⁷ Dharmata is a Sanskrit term that can also be translated as “reality itself” or “the way things are”. It refers to emptiness or selflessness of phenomena. However, proponents of the Sautrantika School do not assert emptiness or selflessness of phenomena; they only assert selflessness of persons. Therefore, here, selflessness of phenomena or dharmata refers to emptiness according to the Chittamatra School; it refers to the ‘lack of subject and object being different substantial entities’ or ‘the absence of external existence’.

¹⁸ For an awareness that realizes dharmata or emptiness directly, dharmata is a manifest phenomenon, whereas for an awareness realizing dharmata conceptually, dharmata is a hidden phenomenon. Therefore, the meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness on the Mahayana path of seeing realizes the manifest factor of dharmata, whereas the conceptual consciousness realizing emptiness on the Mahayana path of preparation realizes the hidden factor of dharmata.

[Response:] Well, then, even if the first moment of the omniscient consciousness has already realized a thing as yet-to-arise, that [thing] must be newly realized as already-arisen [by the omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards.

Our response is that according to the opponent's reasoning, the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes the manifest factor of dharmata, although dharmata has already been realized by the Mahayana path of preparation.

Therefore, following that same line of reasoning, the opponent also has to accept that the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses are valid cognizers because they newly realize a thing as *having-arisen*, although that thing has already been realized by the first moment of the omniscient consciousness (which realized the thing as *yet-to-arise*).

[Someone:] Since it is impossible for a past and a future [thing] to be [things that are] yet-to-arise, whatever is [a thing] that is yet-to-arise is necessarily [a thing] that has already arisen.

An opponent argues that since past and future things exist and since they are impermanent, they are products and thus, by definition, have been created.¹⁹ Since they have been created, they have arisen. Hence, the opponent maintains that there are no past and future things that are yet-to-arise. Instead, whatever is described as a thing that is yet to arise is in actuality something that has already arisen.

[Response:] Well, then, it follows that a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation has already eliminated the seeds of cognitive obstructions, because [those seeds] are yet to be eliminated. It [also] follows that he has already become a Buddha, because he is yet to become a Buddha.

Our own system disputes that if whatever is yet-to-arise has necessarily already arisen, it would follow that a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation has already eliminated the seeds of cognitive obstructions²⁰, because in the continuum of such a Bodhisattva those seeds are yet to be eliminated.

Likewise, it would follow that a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation has already attained Buddhahood because he is yet to attain Buddhahood.

[Someone:] In general, whatever is [a thing] that is yet-to-arise is necessarily [a thing] that has already arisen [but] whatever is [a thing] that is yet-to-arise in the continuum of a person is not necessarily [a thing] that has already arisen.

Here an opponent modifies the statement above by saying that even though in general, whatever is a thing that is yet-to-arise has necessarily already arisen, this is not necessarily the case for things that are about to arise *in the continuum of a person*, for those things have not necessarily already arisen.

¹⁹ Impermanent and product are equivalent. Therefore, whatever is impermanent is necessarily a product. The definition of product is: that which has been generated. This means that all impermanent phenomena necessarily have been generated and thus have arisen.

²⁰ Here, 'seeds of cognitive obstructions' refer to the seeds of awarenesses that are cognitive obstructions. As explained in an earlier note, according to the Chittamatra School, the seeds of awarenesses that grasp at subject and object (or external objects) as being different substantial entities are 'seeds of cognitive obstructions', because awarenesses that grasp at subject and object as being different substantial entities are cognitive obstructions while the seeds of those awarenesses (which are also cognitive obstructions) refer to the potential of those awarenesses to arise in a person's continuum. A Buddha has eliminated both those awarenesses and their seeds, which is why a Buddha has overcome cognitive obstructions.

[Response:] Well, then, there must be [a thing] in the continuum of a person that did not exist earlier as already arisen [while] later it does exist as already arisen. Therefore, with regard to that there is new realization.

Our own system responds that if there are things in the continuum of a person that are yet to arise but have not yet arisen, the opponent has to agree that when these things newly arise, simultaneously with the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness, these things are newly realized as *having-arisen* by the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

If it is possible that from the second moment [of the omniscient consciousness] onwards, sentient beings newly extinguish obstructions, then since [those omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards] must realize the new extinguishment of the obstructions, [the idea] that there are no newly-realizing valid cognizers is undermined.

Also, if it possible that at the time of the second moment and subsequent to the second moment of the omniscient consciousness, sentient beings newly eliminate obstructions to liberation or Buddhahood, the belief is undermined that from the second moment of the omniscient consciousness onwards there are no valid cognizers, because the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness newly realize these cessations of obstructions as having been newly attained.

Illustrated by those [examples], other cases should also be understood.

Based on the examples given above of phenomena that are newly realized by the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness, one should be able to understand other cases of phenomena that are newly realized by those awarenesses.

No matter how much I turn inwards to think about it, I do not contend that there are omniscient consciousnesses that are not *pramana* and that whatever is *pramana* does not newly realize [its object].

As a conclusion of this outline Gyaltsab Je adds a personal comment by saying that no matter how much he reflects on it, he does not hold that there are omniscient consciousnesses that are not valid cognizers or that whatever is a valid cognizer does not necessarily newly realize its object.

In brief, the Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni is the very *pramana*, i.e., he can be called “valid cognizer”, or he is a *valid cognizer being*, because he has awarenesses that are knowers which are newly non-deceptive with regard to all phenomena — conventional and ultimate truth — and because he is newly non-deceptive. (“*Possessing that [pramana] the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*”)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why does the *Pramanavarttika* describe Buddha Shakyamuni as “the very *pramana*”?
2. What do the ‘mode of existence’ and the ‘varieties of phenomena’ refer to?
3. Why does an opponent assert that the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness are not valid cognizers?
4. What is the logical fault if there are no new objects of knowledge from the second moment of the omniscient consciousness onwards?

5. What does the second moment of the omniscient consciousness realize that the first moment of the omniscient consciousness does not?
6. What would be the logical fault if there were an eighth-bhumi Bodhisattva who had attained the enlightened state of a Buddha?
7. Why is the first moment of the path of seeing a valid cognizer?
8. Why does an opponent assert that all past and future things have already arisen?

EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF ‘HAS BECOME [A PRAMANA BEING]’

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The purpose for saying “has become [a *pramana* being]”
- (2) Refuting objections with regard to [saying “has become a *pramana* being”]

THE PURPOSE FOR SAYING “HAS BECOME [A PRAMANA BEING]”

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

In order to counter [the idea] that [the Buddha] has not been generated [Dignaga] says “has become [a pramana being]”. It is reasonable that [the Buddha] is pramana in dependence on accomplishing causes. (7)

[Dignaga] stating “**has become** [a *pramana* being]” in the verse of homage has a eliminative purpose, because [Dignaga] **says** that the Omniscient One “has become [a *pramana* being]” **in order to counter** [the idea] **that** [the Buddha] **has not been generated** by his own causes.

It has an affirmative purpose because [Dignaga says that the Omniscient One “has become a *pramana* being”] for the sake of understanding that the Omniscient One has been generated as ***pramana in dependence on*** fully completing familiarization with the **accomplishing causes** of method and wisdom.

Having set forth the definition of *pramana* or valid cognizer, and explained that the meaning of valid cognizer can be applied to the Buddha, Dharmakirti continues his elucidation of Dignaga’s homage by describing the purpose for Dignaga saying that the Buddha “has become” *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*.

As mentioned before, even though the *Pramanavarttika*’s four chapters comment on Dignaga’s entire text, *i.e.*, the *Pramana-samuccaya* (*Compendium of Pramana*), the second chapter (considered the most important of the four chapters) comments only on the first two lines of the *Pramana-samuccaya*, which constitute Dignaga’s homage to Buddha Shakyamuni.

The two lines of homage to Buddha Shakyamuni read:

*To the one who has become pramana, the one wishing to benefit migrators,
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector”, I bow down.*

Under the present heading Dharmakirti describes two types of purpose for Dignaga stating that the Buddha *has become* a valid cognizer or a *valid cognizer being*.

The two types of purpose are (1) an eliminative purpose (*rnam bcad kyi dgos pa*) and (2) an affirmative purpose (*yongs gcod kyi dgos pa*). In general, an eliminative purpose is expressed by negating something that is not in accordance with reality, while an affirmative purpose is expressed by affirming something that is in accordance with reality.

The eliminative purpose for Dignaga stating that the Buddha has become a *valid cognizer being* is to negate the notion that the Buddha has not been generated by his own causes and conditions.

Therefore, from the point of view of the eliminative purpose, the statement “*To the one who has become pramana*” explicitly refutes the wrong view that the Buddha has not been generated by his own causes and conditions and implicitly indicates that the Buddha has been generated by those causes and conditions.

The affirming purpose for Dignaga stating that the Buddha has become a valid cognizer being is to indicate that the Buddha has become omniscient in dependence on perfecting familiarity with the main causes for enlightenment, commonly referred to as method and wisdom. As mentioned before, method refers to excellent intention, such as great compassion, Bodhicitta, and so forth, while wisdom refers to excellent application, such as the wisdom realizing selflessness, and so forth.

Hence, the statement, “*To the one who has become pramana*” not only helps students of the *Pramana-samuccaya* and the *Pramanavarttika* to come to the understanding that the Buddha has been generated in dependence upon his own causes and conditions, it also enables them to understand that the Buddha became *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being* in dependence on meditating on great compassion, Bodhicitta, wisdom, and so forth.

Alternatively, regarding the subject, the Omniscient One, **it is reasonable** that he **is** a **pramana** being, because **in dependence** on the correct syllogisms which are **the proofs** of [the Buddha] being the Omniscient One he is established to be *pramana*.

Alternatively, Gyaltsab Je presents another interpretation of the last line of the three lines from the *Pramanavarttika* pertaining to this outline (“*It is reasonable that [the Buddha] is pramana in dependence on accomplishing causes*”).

Instead of the affirmative purpose cited above, according to this interpretation, the line expresses the following affirmative purpose:

Dignaga says that the Buddha has become a *valid cognizer being* for the sake of conveying that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* (although there was a time he was just an ordinary being), since this can be established by correct syllogisms. It can be established by correct syllogisms because the above mentioned five syllogisms of the *forward system* and the five syllogisms of the *reverse system* provide the proofs or reasons establishing that the Buddha (while a sentient being) was able to gradually transform and purify his mind and eventually became omniscient and thus a *valid cognizer being*.

Comprehending these syllogisms enables one to gain a firm understanding that the Buddha became a *valid cognizer being* in dependence on particular causes and conditions, and that a *valid cognizer being* who is self-arisen and permanent is impossible.

Please note that according to the second interpretation, the term “accomplishing cause” needs to be replaced by the term “proof”. But this is only necessary in English, for the Tibetan term “*sgrub bye*” holds both meanings.

Therefore, the line from the *Pramanavarttika* (according to the second interpretation) reads, “*It is reasonable that [the Buddha] is pramana in dependence on proofs*”.

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the *eliminative purpose* for Dignaga saying in his homage to Buddha Shakyamuni that ‘the Buddha has become *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*’?
2. Why is the eliminative purpose described as ‘negative’?

3. What is the first affirmative purpose for Dignaga saying in his homage to Buddha Shakyamuni that ‘the Buddha has become *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*’?
4. What is the second affirmative purpose for Dignaga saying in his homage to Buddha Shakyamuni that ‘the Buddha has become *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*’?
5. Why is the affirmative purpose described as ‘affirmative’?
6. What is the name of the text in which Dignaga pays homage to the Buddha by describing him as a *valid cognizer being*?

REFUTING OBJECTIONS WITH REGARD TO [THE PURPOSE OF SAYING “HE HAS BECOME A PRAMANA BEING”]

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea that God], who knows how to make all objects of knowledge, is omniscient
- (2) Establishing that [the Buddha] who directly cognizes the mode of existence of all [objects of knowledge] is omniscient

REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT GOD], WHO KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ALL OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE, IS OMNISCIENT

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea of] a God who created everything
- (2) Refuting the proofs [of the existence of a creator God cited by an opponent]

REFUTING [THE IDEA OF] A GOD WHO CREATED EVERYTHING

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea that a creator God] is permanent
- (2) Refuting [the idea that a creator God] is impermanent

Please note that the next two outlines refute the notion of a creator God by way of refuting a permanent and an impermanent creator God.

The concept of God that is refuted here is a concept that was held by several ancient Indian non-Buddhist traditions asserting an omniscient and omnipotent Supreme Being, who is the principal law-maker for human beings and the creator of the universe, living beings, and so forth.

In ancient India there were also non-Buddhist philosophers who did not assert a creator God, while others set forth an abstract principle, like the followers of the Samkya tradition who held that the physical world is a manifestation of what they called the ‘*primordial nature*’ (*prakṛti*, *spyi gtzo bo*).

The Vedic and Brahmanic traditions postulated numerous different gods, many of them personifications of natural forces. However, the Brahmanic tradition eventually reached a point when one of these gods was regarded as superior to all others, and was even considered to be the omniscient and omnipotent creator of everything (*Ishvara*).

The latter view is refuted in this section of the *Pramanavarttika*, which is reflected by the usage here of the Tibetan term “*dbang phyug*” for God. *Dbang phyug* literally means ‘the one rich in power’ and is used as the Tibetan translation for *Ishvara*, the All-mighty, or Creator of the World.

The concept of *Ishvara* that originated in India is similar to the concept of a single creator God in the monotheistic religions that emerged in the Middle East (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

Yet, although Buddhism does not accept a creator God, it does set forth the existence of a category of beings called “celestial beings” (*deva, lha*). In some English translations these beings are also referred to as ‘gods’, which can be confusing, since celestial beings are essentially irrelevant to human existence. They are samsaric beings born in the celestial realm as a result of afflictions and karma, and once the karma that propelled them to take birth in that realm is exhausted, they can be reborn in other realms depending on their remaining karma. Celestial beings are not endowed with special powers to particularly influence and benefit others, and from the point of view of spiritually transforming the mind in order to attain liberation or Buddhahood, a celestial birth is considered inferior to a human rebirth.

It is important to understand that Buddhism is not primarily concerned with refuting the notion of a creator God. Instead, it is chiefly concerned with developing the methods to reduce and eventually eradicate the afflictions and their imprints in order to attain liberation and Buddhahood. In fact, very few of the Buddha’s numerous discourses are directly concerned with the question of God.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that the Buddhist refutation of God is only addressed to Buddhist practitioners, rather than to the followers of other religions systems that postulate a creator God.

For followers of theistic religions, belief in God can be extremely beneficial and must be respected. This is why numerous Buddhist masters (including H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama) strongly encourage followers of the principal theistic religions to maintain and possibly deepen their faith in God, for such faith enables them to live a moral and compassionate life.

For Buddhist practitioners striving for the attainment of liberation or Buddhahood, it is important to understand the non-existence of a creator God. This is because the notion of an omnipotent being conflicts with some of the fundamental Buddhist concepts, realization of which is essential to progress on the Buddhist paths.

For instance, the notion of God cannot be reconciled with the Buddhist concepts of karma, selflessness, dependent arising, and Buddha-nature.

It is vital for Buddhist practitioners to understand that one’s own mind is the creator of everything, of happiness and suffering. It is in dependence on the mind — one’s thoughts, ideas, judgments, etc. — that actions of body, speech, and mind are created, resulting in one’s different emotions and experiences.

Therefore, states of lasting happiness can only be attained by transforming and purifying one’s own mind.

This is expressed by the Buddha when he says:

*One is one’s own protector;
One is one’s own enemy;
Regarding positive and negative deeds,
One is one’s own witness.*

This is also reflected in the practice of taking refuge, which is the entryway into Buddhist practice. Of the three objects of refuge — Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha — Dharma that has been generated in one’s own mental continuum is the actual refuge. Here, Dharma refers to qualities such as wisdom, love, compassion, etc., and the elimination of afflictions. The Buddha and Sangha are regarded as secondary objects of refuge, for they merely introduce and teach the means of cultivating the actual refuge. Without developing the Dharma in one’s mental continuum, the guidance and advice of the Buddha

and the Sangha will not be able to protect one, and their mental qualities will not be of benefit to oneself.

In order to overcome suffering, one needs to take personal responsibility, generate the determination to transform the mind, develop mindfulness, introspection, and so forth, so that one is gradually able to break through one's habitual thought patterns, and replace destructive mental states with love, compassion, wisdom, etc.

Therefore, the Buddhist paths to lasting happiness and the actualization of one's highest potential are based on mental transformation, not on prayer or worship of an external entity, for only in dependence on one's own mind is one able to attain liberation and Buddhahood.

REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS PERMANENT

[Someone:] God who created everything is a *pramana being* who is permanent and self-arisen.

Here, an opponent who asserts the existence of a creator God claims that God is a *valid cognizer being* who is permanent and self-arisen.

According to the opponent, God is a *valid cognizer being* because he realizes all phenomena and because he is omnipotent; he is permanent because he does not change moment by moment; and he is self-arisen because he does not depend on causes and conditions but has always existed as a *valid cognizer being*.

Please note that from a Buddhist point of view, Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because he is omniscient, *i.e.*, he realizes all phenomena. In fact, being an omniscient being and a *valid cognizer being* are equivalent.

From the point of view of non-Buddhists asserting a creator God, being an omniscient being and a *valid cognizer being* are also equivalent. However, according to them, being omniscient does not only mean to realize all phenomena it also means to be able to create all phenomena, *i.e.*, to be omnipotent. Here, God is omniscient because he realizes all phenomena and because he knows how to create all phenomena.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*There is no permanent pramana,
Because pramana realizes existent things and,
Because owing to impermanent objects of knowledge,
That [pramana] is not fixed. (8)*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, God, it follows that he does not exist as permanent *pramana*, **because** whoever is [God] is necessarily ***pramana realizing existent things***. There is a pervasion, because if there are **objects of knowledge** that are **impermanent**, *pramana* that conceives them **is** necessarily **not fixed**.

In response to the assertion that there is a permanent and self-arisen God, our own system says: regarding the subject, God, it follows that he is not a permanent *pramana*, *i.e.*, a permanent *valid cognizer being*, because whoever is God is necessarily *pramana* realizing functioning things (impermanent phenomena)

In other words, God is not a permanent *pramana*, because if such God were to exist, any instant or moment of him would have to be a *valid cognizer being* who realizes impermanent phenomena.

There is a pervasion, because *pramana* perceiving impermanent objects of knowledge cannot be fixed or unchanging.

Please note that “there is a pervasion” means that the *reason* of the above-cited logical statement pervades the *predicate* of the statement. The *reason* of the above-cited statement is: because whoever is [God] is necessarily *pramana* realizing existent things and the *predicate* is: he [God] does not exist as permanent *pramana*.

The reason pervades the predicate because if *whoever is God is necessarily pramana realizing functioning things*, then it must be the case that *God does not exist as permanent pramana*. This is because *pramana* that perceives impermanent phenomena cannot be fixed or permanent.

Therefore, our own system says that God cannot be permanent because he perceives impermanent phenomena that are changing moment by moment. If he perceives phenomena that are changing moment by moment, he cannot be permanent, because whoever or whatever perceives phenomena that change moment by moment also has to change moment by moment.

Some who challenge the teachings of the Buddha say that [this verse] refutes permanent conventional *pramana*, but it does not refute permanent ultimate *pramana*.

According to Khedrup Je’s *Ocean of Reasoning, a Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika*, the opponents who say that the verse from the *Pramanavarttika* (“*There is no permanent pramana / Because pramana realizes existent things and / Because owing to impermanent objects of knowledge / That [pramana] is not fixed.*”) refutes permanent conventional *pramana* but not permanent ultimate *pramana* were Tibetans who were contemporaries of Khedrup Je.

This is slightly unusual because most of the opponents cited in the commentaries on the *Pramana-samuccaya* and the *Pramanavarttika* were Indian scholars.

As mentioned above, conventional valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, conventional truth, while ultimate valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, ultimate truth.

According to the Sautrantika School, ultimate truth and impermanent phenomenon are equivalent, while conventional truth and permanent phenomenon are equivalent.

According to the Chittamatra School, ultimate truth refers to emptiness, while conventional truth refers to all phenomena other than emptiness.

[Response:] These are the words of those who do not have the slightest grasp of the logical presentation refuting permanence. If a permanent [phenomenon] that is a conventional *pramana* were to exist, there would be *pramana* that is [both] permanent and a thing. If that were the case, then consider [the following]: what ultimate or conventional distinction is there between [a permanent conventional *pramana* which is] the object of refutation and the ultimate *pramana* that is asserted by you?

Our own system responds by presenting the opponent with the following debate: even though you do not assert that there are permanent conventional valid cognizers, if there were a permanent conventional valid cognizer, it would have to be both permanent and impermanent. It would be impermanent because a valid cognizer necessarily changes moment by moment. If you were to accept that a conventional valid cognizer is both permanent and impermanent, you would also have to assert that an ultimate valid cognizer is both permanent and impermanent (an ultimate valid cognizer must be impermanent because it is a valid cognizer).

Therefore, consider the following: what is the difference between a conventional valid cognizer and an ultimate valid cognizer? Since they are both valid cognizers they must both be impermanent. So why would you assert that one is permanent while the other is not, even though there is no actual ultimate or conventional difference between those two

awarenesses (except for the fact the one realizes ultimate truth and the other, conventional truth).

[Someone:] Although an eye that remains motionless gradually apprehends [different] forms, the eye does not do anything differently. Likewise, since objects of knowledge are impermanent, God's consciousness is not firm, but God who is cognizing is permanent.

Here, an opponent presents the analogy of an eye sense power which remains motionless or unchanging although different shapes and colors successively appear to it. Then these shapes and colors are perceived by the eye consciousness. Although the eye consciousness is impermanent, for it perceives different forms, the eye sense power remains unchanging, without doing anything differently from one moment to the next.

Please note that, here, the eye does not refer to the eyeball but to the eye sense power. The eye sense power is traditionally described as a subtle inner physical form, to which shape and color appear and which produces the eye consciousness that is aware of and perceives the shapes and colors.

The opponent claims that, like the eye consciousness, God's consciousnesses realizing impermanent phenomena change moment by moment, while God who cognizes these things is permanent.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

Because it is not feasible that those generated in sequence

Be generated by a permanent [phenomenon]

[And] because it is not suitable [for a permanent phenomenon to] depend [on conditions].

[Response:] Regarding the subject, God's consciousnesses, it follows that **it is not feasible that they be generated by a permanent God**, because earlier and later consciousnesses **are generated in sequence**.

Our own system responds by saying that God's consciousnesses are not generated or created by a permanent God, since his earlier and later consciousnesses are generated in sequence.

If his consciousnesses are generated in sequence, God must be impermanent because at the time when God generates an earlier consciousness he is not yet able to generate a later consciousness. Hence there is a difference between God who generates an earlier consciousness and God who generates a later consciousness.

If earlier and later consciousnesses *were* generated by God himself, earlier and later consciousnesses would not be generated in sequence but simultaneously, since there is no difference between an earlier and a later God. There is no difference between an earlier and a later God because (according to the opponent) God is permanent and thus does not change moment by moment. Hence, there would be no reason for God not to generate all of his awarenesses at the same time.

Also, [a permanent God] does not generate [consciousnesses] in dependence on [other] conditions, **because it is not suitable** for a permanent [phenomenon] to **depend** on conditions.

Also, if God were not to generate his consciousnesses himself, but were to depend on other conditions that generated or created those consciousnesses, it would follow that God would depend on other conditions. However, this is not acceptable because a permanent phenomenon does not depend on impermanent conditions.

Further, if the eye does not do anything differently, it apprehends the later [object] at the time of apprehending the earlier [object].

Similarly, it is not possible for an eye sense power not to do anything differently from moment to moment, *i.e.*, to remain unchanging. This is because if the eye consciousness were to remain unchanging, the shape and color that appear to it later would have to appear to it at the same time as the shape and color that appear to it earlier.

This reasoning is similar to the above reasoning to refute a permanent God generating his consciousnesses in succession: If earlier and later shapes and colors appear to the eye sense power, the eye sense power must be impermanent, because the earlier eye sense power changes into the later eye sense power. The earlier eye sense power changes into the later eye sense power because the earlier shape and color do not appear to the later eye sense power, and the later shape and color do not appear to the earlier eye sense power.

If the eye sense power were permanent, there would be no difference between an earlier and later eye sense power. If there were no difference between an earlier and later eye sense power, the shapes and color that appear to the eye sense power in succession would appear to the eye sense power at the same time. If the earlier and later shapes and colors were to appear to the eye sense power at the same time, the later shape and color would appear at the time of the earlier shape and color.

In brief, God is not a permanent *valid cognizer being*, because he realizes functioning things. Since functioning things change moment by moment, the person or awareness that perceives these things also has to change moment by moment. Therefore, owing to objects of knowledge being impermanent, a *valid cognizer being* cannot be fixed or permanent. (“*There is no permanent pramana / Because pramana realizes existent things and / Because owing to impermanent objects of knowledge / That [pramana] is not fixed.*”)

Nor is it feasible to assert that God’s consciousnesses are impermanent while God is permanent, because God’s earlier and later consciousnesses are generated sequentially, and something that is generated in sequence cannot be generated by a permanent phenomenon. (“*Because it is not feasible that those generated in sequence / Are generated by a permanent [phenomenon]*”)

Similarly, it is not correct to hold that God depends on other conditions that generate his consciousnesses, because God is permanent and a permanent phenomenon does not depend on impermanent conditions. (“*[And] because it is not suitable [a permanent phenomenon] depends [on conditions].*”)

QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the meaning of ‘self-arisen’, and what would it imply if God were self-arisen?
2. What does it mean to be omniscient from a Buddhist point of view and from the point of view of a non-Buddhist asserting a creator God?
3. Why does a person or awareness perceiving impermanent phenomena have to be impermanent?
4. How does our own system refute the notion that conventional valid cognizers are impermanent while ultimate valid cognizers are permanent?
5. What is the analogy an opponent cites when claiming that God is permanent while his consciousnesses are impermanent?
6. How does our own system refute the analogy?

7. How does our own system refute the view that God is permanent while his consciousnesses are impermanent?
8. What is the fault incurred if one asserts that God is permanent and that he depends on other conditions that generate his consciousnesses?

REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS IMPERMANENT

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way,
Although [he is] impermanent, there is no pramana.*

[Someone:] **Although** God himself **is impermanent**, he did not previously experience attachment, etc., while in samsara nor, as an antidote to that, [did he] depend on the accomplishing causes of familiarizing with generosity, etc. Instead, since beginningless time, he has been generated by an earlier continuum of a similar type as being free from attachment and omniscient.

An opponent says that God is impermanent and thus changes moment by moment. However, this does not mean that there was a time when God was not omniscient nor a *valid cognizer being*.

Unlike the Buddha, God was not formerly an ordinary person taking repeated birth in samsara under the control of contaminated karma and afflictions such as anger, attachment, etc.; then eventually entering the Mahayana path, meditating on the six paramitas such as generosity, morality, etc., in order to attain the omniscient state of a *valid cognizer being*.

Instead, God is self-arisen because he has never depended on causes and conditions other than himself; since beginningless time God has been generated from former moments of God who were of a similar type in that they were always free from attachment and always omniscient.

[Response:] Regarding the subject, God, it follows that **there is no pramana** that is a proof [establishing that] he is an Omniscient One who has been generated by an earlier continuum of a similar type, because there has not been any previous moment during an earlier samsaric period when [he] has been harmed or **benefited in any way** by conditions that are thoroughly afflicted or completely pure.

In response, our own system says that there is no *pramana* that is a proof establishing that God is an Omniscient Being who has been generated by an earlier continuum of a similar type, *i.e.*, as omniscient and free from any fault.

Please note that here, *pramana* does not mean 'valid cognizer' but correct reason or proof.

Therefore, according to our own system, there is no proof or correct reason establishing that God has been generated by an earlier continuum of God who was a *valid cognizer being*. This is because, unlike the Buddha, there has never been any time when God was an ordinary being who was troubled by thoroughly afflicted states of mind, such as anger, attachment, etc., or benefited by completely pure states of mind, such as a meditative equipoise realizing the ultimate mode of existence of phenomena.

If God had once been a samsaric being who gradually transformed and completely purified his mind, it would be possible to establish that God is an omniscient valid cognizer being, just as it is possible with regard to the Buddha.

Second Chapter of the Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika

EXPLANATION OF [THIS CHAPTER'S] OBJECTS OF REALIZATION – LIBERATION, OMNISCIENCE AND THE PATHS THAT LEAD THERE

I. THE GENERAL MEANING

1.1. CITING THE EXPLANATION BY ACHARYA DIGNAGA

1.2. THE WAY THE MEANING [OF DIGNAGA'S EXPLANATION] IS ELUCIDATED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE *PRAMANAVARTTIKA*

1.3. [DIGNAGA AND DHARMAKIRTI'S] VIEW

II. THE MEANING OF THE BRANCHES

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2.1.1.1.1.1.1. THE DEFINITION

2.1.1.1.1.1.1.1. IDENTIFYING *NON-DECEPTIVE*

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2.1.1.1.1.1.1.3. DISPELLING [THE VIEW OF A] *BROAD PERVASION* (*i.e.*, REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION IS TOO BROAD)

2.1.1.1.1.1.2. THE INSTANCES

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2.1.1.1.1.2. THE ATTRIBUTES

2.1.1.1.2. SHOWING THAT THE MUNI ALSO POSSESSES THAT DEFINITION (*i.e.*, THAT THE MUNI IS A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* OR THAT HE POSSESSES *VALID COGNIZERS*)

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2.1.1.1.2.2. EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF ‘HAS BECOME [A *PRAMANA BEING*]’

2.1.1.1.2.2.1. THE PURPOSE FOR SAYING “HAS BECOME [A *PRAMANA BEING*]”

2.1.1.1.2.2.2. REFUTING OBJECTIONS WITH REGARD TO [SAYING “HAS BECOME A *PRAMANA BEING*”]

2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT GOD], WHO KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ALL OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE, IS OMNISCIENT

2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.1. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS PERMANENT

2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.2. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS IMPERMANENT

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2.1.1.1.2.2.2.2. ESTABLISHING THAT [THE BUDDHA], WHO DIRECTLY COGNIZES THE MODE OF EXISTENCE OF ALL [OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE], IS OMNISCIENT

2.1.1.2. IDENTIFYING THE DEFINITION OF A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* BY WAY OF EXPLAINING THE FOUR REMAINING [FACTORS]

2.1.1.3. IDENTIFYING THE PATHS THAT LEAD TO [THE STATE OF BEING A *VALID COGNIZER BEING*]

2.1.2. SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE REVERSE SYSTEM THE REASON FOR THE BUDDHA HAVING ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL]

2.2 PURPOSE OF PRAISING [THE MUNI] ON ACCOUNT OF [BEING] A *VALID COGNIZER*